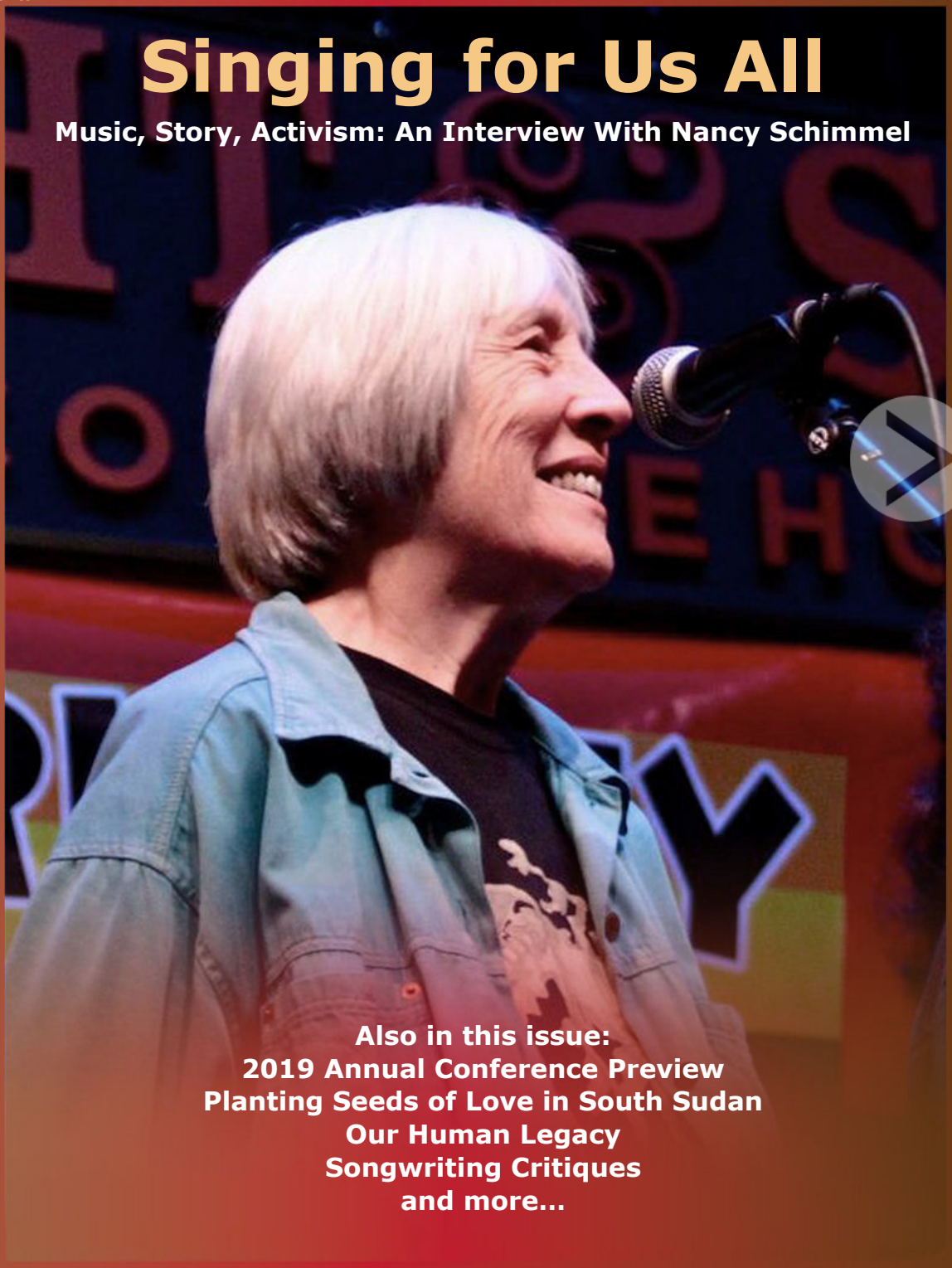
Issue #88 | Fall 2019

Singing for Us All

Music, Story, Activism: An Interview With Nancy Schimmel



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Songwriting Critiques
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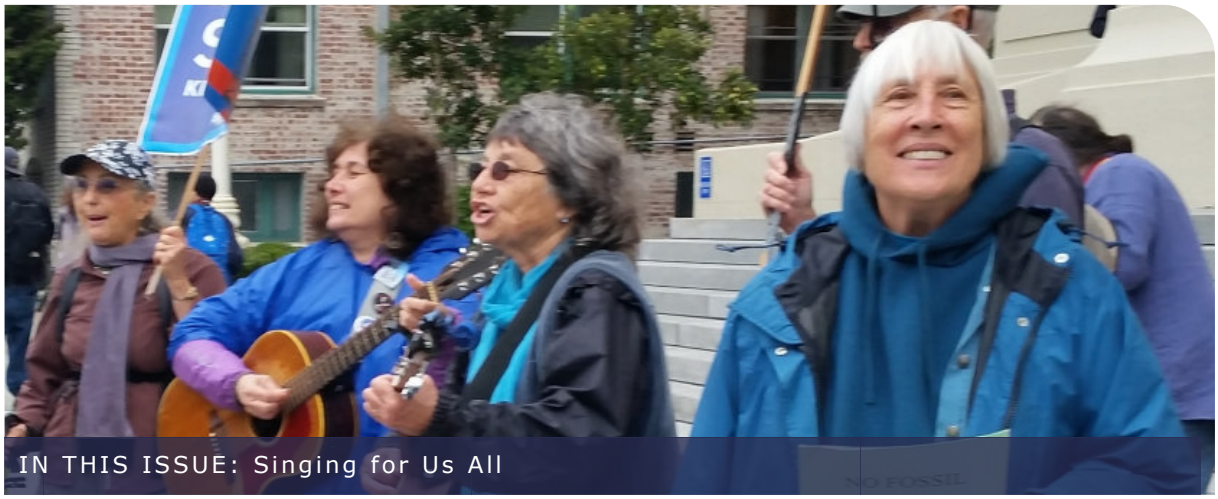

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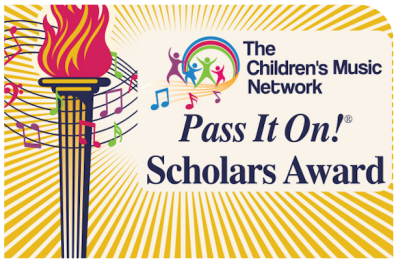

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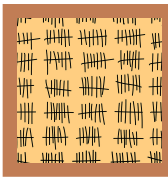

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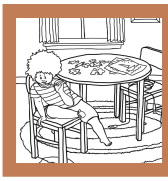

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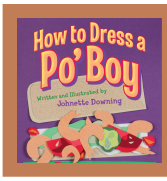

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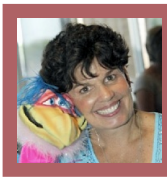

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Cover photo: Sandy Morris

Letter From the Editor

by Ginger Lazarus

Nancy Schimmel has spent a lifetime singing out in solidarity with the oppressed and downtrodden. She keeps the tradition of protest songs fresh and alive, in part with her group Occupella and their website chock full of downloadable lyrics available to occupiers and freedom fighters everywhere. Here's the chorus of one song contributed by Nancy, featuring new lyrics set to the bluegrass hymn "Bringing in the Sheaves":

> Singing for us all, singing for us all
> Singing through the dark times,
> Singing for us all

You can feel this same commitment to lifting up her fellow humans in songs like "1492" and "Montana, Colorado, Nevada." However, when Nancy sings for us all, she isn't relieving us of our own responsibilities. No doubt when she accepts the Magic Penny Award at the 2019 CMN Conference, she will have us all singing *with* her as well. I'll stop here and direct you to Sally Roger's wonderful interview in this issue, where you can hear Nancy's rich history of music, story, and activism in her own words.

CMN members have long recognized song as a tool of communal empowerment and connection. This issue features many ambassadors who "sing for us all" in the world. Please don't miss "Planting Seeds of Love in South Sudan," the inspiring story of cross-continental collaboration that brought Pam Donkin's joyous song to the children of the Bidibidi refugee camp in Uganda, who continue to plant seeds of joy, hope, and peace in their own communities. Roman Orona, one of the artists who will welcome conference-goers to Scottdale, shares his thoughts on our collective responsibility to future generations, while our first-ever *PIO!* Scholar winner Sophia Bereaud takes up that challenge in her remarkable essay. And David Meyers breaks down his successful practice for empowering children with special needs to make their music heard.

In Columns, Alina Celeste shows us how to use Facebook Groups to open connections and conversations. In Songs, we get fingerplays and movement, as well as a zesty splash of Southwestern culture. Speaking of which, as this issue goes to press, you still have time to join us September 20–22 for One Drum Many Songs / *Un Tambor Muchas Canciones*. Conference Co-Chairs Alice Burba and Katherine Dines have spiced up the usual schedule with some new twists and convened a slate of jaw-dropping awesomeness to lead workshops and song swaps. Check out the Conference Preview and register now!

Keep singing for us—and with us. Your voice matters.

Ginger Lazarus, Editor

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The Children's Music Network

Music, Story, Activism

An Interview With Nancy Schimmel

by Sally Rogers[1]

I believe I first met Nancy Schimmel through either People's Music Network or CMN. But I remember meeting an unassuming and gentle person, kind, welcoming, and warm to all those around her. I remember best her storytelling prowess. She could hook you into a story as fast as a frog can snag a fly, and keep you there right through to the end. I bought her book, Just Enough to Tell a Story*, to teach myself some of the tricks of the trade and learned to tell her story, "The Yam Thief." Then I learned her song, "1492," which is THE best answer to the travesty of Columbus Day (now Indigenous People's Day in many communities). Nancy follows in the footsteps of her mother, the late Malvina Reynolds, as a songwriter who can tackle difficult subjects with cleverness and commitment. She never speaks down to children, and respects their keen intelligence. Heck, she treats us ALL as equals and quietly and fervently nudges us to make the world a better place, as she is busy doing.*

It was truly an honor to be asked to do this interview with Nancy. Although we were a continent apart, it was like sitting in her living room with a cup of tea, having a friendly conversation as we reminisced about her life and involvement with CMN. I hope you enjoy this glimpse into Nancy's vibrant life, full of music, story, and activism.

Sally: Nancy, you are the second in your family to receive the Magic Penny award: your mom was our first and the reason for the name. How did you get involved in CMN to begin with?

Nancy: I don't know the date of that outdoor circle where I was first introduced to CMN. I'm pretty sure it was at a People's Music Network gathering. What I remember about it is that we were all going around the circle saying something, I forget what. And we had, like, two minutes, to say it. And so, I think it was Sarah Pirtle who set this up so that someone was timekeeper, and when the time was up they started humming, and whoever heard them hum started humming. Until enough people were humming that the person who was talking realized their time was up. And if we were so fascinated with what they were saying, I suppose we wouldn't think to hum! Anyway, if that didn't work and they kept talking and the timekeeper needed to do another nudge, she was to start making kissing noises, and then we would all pick that up. So, everyone would be going *mwah-mwuh!* [kissing sounds] and that meant time was up! It was effective, loving goofiness. CMN people do nutty things, and we all become more family that way.

I didn't go every year to PMN but I went a few times. We had something called Freedom Song Network (FSN) out here, so it's not like I didn't have a political music thing to go to. I'm pretty sure Bonnie [Lockhart] was part of FSN. And that's how I met Hali Hammer.

She's one of the Occupellans, along with Bonnie, Betsy [Rose], and me.

Tell me about Occupella. It came out of the Occupy movement, I assume.

Occupella (Hali Hammer, Bonnie Lockhart, Nancy) and friends at an anti-fracking march in Oakland

Bonnie suggested that some people she knew get together and have Song Circles once a week at Occupy Berkeley and once a week at Occupy Oakland. We did them during the noon hour. We would just sit around and sing, and whoever felt like joining us did, and out of that group came Occupella. We go to rallies and marches—we arrange with the people who are organizing, or they ask us, or whatever. And we lead people in singing; we have song sheets. So, the idea is not that it's a performance but that it involves everybody. And if it's a march, people drop out for a while, sing with us, and then go on. The songs that we use are mostly parodies, or they're old-time movement songs—"Which Side Are You On?" and songs like that. All the parodies are online so anyone can use these anywhere: occupella.org[2]. We didn't feel like it was any use making a printed songbook 'cause we keep changing things and writing new songs. We have, like, four different versions of our "Stop the Pipeline" song. The situation keeps changing, so we change.

Let's talk a little bit about your growing up, because you certainly were growing up in an interesting home. Your dad was a union activist and a storyteller himself. And of course, your mom wrote songs, but I guess she didn't start writing songs until actually you were out of the house?

She was writing songs when I was in junior high and high school. She wrote some songs for the Henry Wallace campaign. That was in '48. I graduated from high school in '52. So, she started writing songs and she sang them at hootenannies with a bunch of other people, or she sang them at meetings, at rallies—events like that. She didn't start doing concerts until I was through college and married.

But you certainly grew up exposed to a lot of musical activism, music "doing a job."

Yes, I did. People's Songs started right after the Second World War. It started in New York but it had a Los Angeles branch. Earl Robinson was one of the people there who was central to that. And so, we were living in Long Beach and we would go into Los Angeles for hootenannies. Or we would have local ones. If it was in Long Beach, it would be at the Masonic Temple. People would rent a room to have a meeting, and I remember we kids would generally ride up and down in the self-service elevator. You know, kind of fooling around, but if there was singing going on, we'd be there.

I just love the idea of you being a little tyke and having all this going on around you. When you were in high school, was it still interesting, or did you sort of fight against it?

When I was in high school, my mother ran for City Council. This was when I was a junior, 'cause I was taking United States History and Government. And

there was another girl there whose father was running for City Council. So, the teacher had us each give an oral report about that. The other girl talked about the campaign and what it was like to have her father doing this stuff. And I did a campaign speech about the issues. My father had trained me. When I was really little he would put me up on the wood box by the fireplace and have me raise my fist and say, "We want more pork and beans!" So, we were at a Socialist picnic—and I have no memory of this, I was too young to remember it—we were at a Socialist picnic and there were speeches. And he noticed that I was very interested.

All-ages song circle on MLK Day, 2015, at Fruitvale Station in Oakland *(Photo credit: Cathy Cade)*

He asked me if I wanted to make a speech. I said, "Yes!" So, he took me up on his arm and took me up to the chair, and said, "This little comrade wants to make a speech." And the guy said, "Yeah, sure, put her up on the platform." So they did, and I raised my fist in the air and said, "We want more pork and beans!"

At the same time I was learning to talk, I was learning to speak, which is different. And also, my father was a carpenter, and he was working on a dam they were building up in the Sierras, and we went up to visit. He would put me up on the bar in the local watering hole, and put a nickel in the jukebox, and I would dance. So, it was politics and art all the way from the very beginning!

Clearly, your early exposure to public speaking helped you along as a storyteller. Did you start telling stories in high school, or later?

I'd say later. I was singing with kids when I was in high school and college 'cause I was a summer camp counselor. Afterward, I was doing some singing with kids in day camp. And that is where I started doing Pete Seeger's "Foolish Frog" story. So, that's really the first story that I told. It's such a useful story because you can get any-age kids involved. It wasn't until later that I started just telling stories. When I went to library school, I took a storytelling class, because I wanted to be a children's librarian, and librarians do story hours. I liked working with children, but it was a job that fit me because I know a little bit about a lot of things; you're dealing with all subjects with the kids.

While taking the class, I wanted to tell "The Little Red Hen" as one of the stories. I went to the library and I looked at a book, and at the ending, the Little Red Hen didn't just say, "No, I will eat the bread." It had her sharing the bread with her children! She can't just have it on her own after she did all the work?! She has to be a mother? So, I went to my mother's place and said, "Tell me the Little Red Hen." Somehow I knew it would be right if she told me the story. 'Cause that's the way I had learned it when I was a kid. And she told it right! So, I went and told it right and she went and wrote the song, "The Little Red Hen."

I was a children's librarian in a public library. I also did two years as a school librarian and a short stint as a reference librarian. I was toying with the idea of quitting, because I wanted to explore something else, so I took a leave of absence. Guy Carawan was touring out here and invited me to go to Highlander at the time of the National Storytelling Festival in Jonesborough [Tennessee]. It was just a revelation! I met the Folk Tellers [cousins Connie Regan-Blake and Barbara Freeman]; one had been a librarian and the other had been hired by the library to tell stories, and then they had quit and gone on the road. And I thought, "Well, I'm a librarian. I tell stories at the library. I could quit and go on the road." [laughs] I had, between 1974 and 1975, left

my husband, come out as a lesbian, and discovered that you could be a storyteller as a job.

My first partner was organizing feminist librarians into the organization called Women Library Workers. We started traveling. I was helping her organize and she was helping me tell stories. Our first tour was in ’76; we went all across the country telling stories in women’s bookstores like Women and Children First in Chicago and A Room of One’s Own in Madison. It was an exciting time to be on the road.

And I think that was the time when storytelling as a performance art really was being accepted as a thing to do for grownups. It wasn’t just for kids.

When I’d say I was a storyteller they’d say, “Oh, you tell stories for kids.” I’d say “Well yeah, and to adults.” You still had to explain that. But I did do a lot of storytelling to kids. I also did a little bit of teaching storytelling to kids as an artist in residence in schools.

Nancy on tour in Japan with her mother, Malvina Reynolds, in 1970

When did you write the storytelling book *Just Enough to Tell a Story*? I met you and bought your book and devoured it.

That came out of teaching storytelling in Madison. I was making all these handouts on the ditto machine and thought it would be easier if I had a book, so I went home and wrote one and self-published it. The first one was in 1978.

If I had to guess, I’d say that all of your storytelling performances included some singing?

Pretty much, depending on the age of the kids. But I really did start writing songs after I left my husband. I started writing poetry. We were together for seventeen years, and I think I wrote one poem in all that time.

You have one daughter?

Not from that marriage. I got pregnant in college and gave her up for adoption. We got back together when she was thirty-seven. She grew up in a household where the people appreciated art but didn’t create it. And she did it. So, she was glad to know where that came from. My mother was dead by the time she and I met. But she did get a chance to meet her aunt who was a photographer. She got the connection with music from me and visual art from her aunt. I think it really helped her become more comfortable with herself. She’s coming to the conference.

Video of Nancy’s “Vegetable Song” with animation by her daughter, Nancy Ibsen[4]

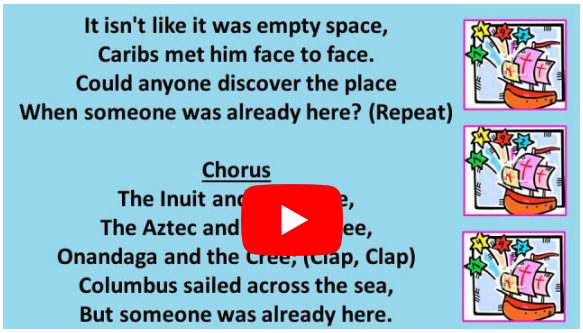
I do some visual art and craft myself, but I’ve tended to neglect it of late. CMN inspired me to do two quilt squares, the second of which I’m particularly happy with. It’s the dragon square on the latest CMN quilt, and it was inspired by “I Think of a Dragon,” which I wrote with Judy Fjell. The song was inspired by Mara Sapon-Shevin and her work on behalf of young people who have been bullied.

Some of your songs have really taken off. "1492" for one. It was in the *Teaching Tolerance* book and I recorded it. You want to tell the story about that?

That is my most widely known song. Candy Forest and I recorded it. A Bay Area local group, Grupo Raiz recorded it. You did, and yours also got onto the anthology that John McCutcheon put together. So, it's really gone places. I wrote that in 1991 because 1992 was going to be the 500th anniversary and someone in 1991 had put out a newsletter asking *what are we going to do about this?* There was a local committee that was looking at what was happening here.

An exhibit at the science museum here compared the science in the New World and the Old World. You know, they had a lot of the astronomy here with Chichen Itza and places like that. So, they were doing this exhibit and I went around with the people on the committee, who were both Native American and not, talking and critiquing how things were being presented. One exhibit talked about human sacrifice as part of their religion. Our committee was saying, "yes, and they were doing that at the same time in Europe, with the Inquisition, so could you adjust your exhibit to show that comparison?' It was really an eye-opening time.

I wrote the song and ran it by some Native American people here, and also a Native American storyteller I knew from storytelling, and they approved. I happened to be at KPFA when Louise Erdrich and her husband, Michael Dorris, were going to be on the show. I showed it to them and they approved of it too. Oh, and Berkeley declared that what had been Columbus Day would now become Indigenous Peoples Day. So, after all these years of it being Indigenous Peoples Day and the schools changing their teaching, some teachers and parents recently objected to that song because of the line "it was a courageous thing to do." They felt we shouldn't be praising Columbus. Even though the song is skeptical of Columbus, they wanted something stronger than that.


It isn't like it was empty space,
Caribs met him face to face.
Could anyone discover the place
When someone was already here? (Repeat)
Chorus
Onandaga and the Cree, (Clap, Clap)
Columbus sailed across the sea,
But someone was already here.
Animation of "1492" as recorded by Sally Rogers and featured in the 2003 *Teaching Tolerance* anthology, *I Will Be Your Friend: Songs and Activities for Young Peacemakers*[5]

I'm not sure how I feel about that one.

I was happy to change it, actually. Partially because I didn't want anyone else to change it because they wouldn't do it right. [laughs] So I explain the background: He thought that the world was smaller in diameter than it actually was, which is why he thought he could sail from Europe to Asia. But they probably wouldn't have made it. I mean if there had only been ocean. He thought he could have made it because he thought the world was smaller. In truth, the Greeks knew that it was bigger than he thought it was! He was not paying attention to science. Sort of like climate change.

Anyway, I say something about that and then sing "he didn't know what he thought he knew."

What I like about that line is it ties into what you say later.

"He didn't find what he thought he found." I like that parallel too. So, I didn't mind changing that. But then someone in Ohio, where they have a city named Columbus, she liked it with the courageous thing to do, because it kind of snuck it into people.

I'm also in charge of changing things to my mother's songs, when people call and ask for approval. Some of them are okay, but 90 percent of them are not.

Not that it doesn't need changing, but the change doesn't sound good and it doesn't sound the way my mother would have done it. She's my mother and I know how she would have done it. I mean, I don't know, but. . . .

How did they end up with your mother's song "Little Boxes" for [the television program] *Weeds*?

We found out that the producers of the show were fans of the song and wanted it. They used my mother's recording of it for the first season or two. And then they got all these other people to record it, and also used some other recordings of it that had already been made, including the one in French that the McGarrigle Sisters did. The translation was done by Graeme Allwright. When my mother heard that translation she said, "It sounds better in French than it does in English!" [sings] "Petites boîtes très étroites / Petites boîtes faites en ticky-tacky . . . " She was also amused when someone translated it into Esperanto because she thought Esperanto was a ticky-tacky language! Oh, and she was *very* pleased when "ticky-tacky" got into the dictionary!

Wow! I say you can die and go to heaven when that happens!

It's one thing to get a PhD, but it's entirely something else to get a word in the dictionary!

What hints would you give to songwriters and storytellers about their craft?

Opening credits for *Weeds* with theme song "Little Boxes" by Malvina Reynolds[6]

Well, I find that collaborating is very useful. The other person needs to say "Oh really? Well how would it sound this way?" For instance, for one of the songs that Judy Fjell and I wrote together, we were going back and forth with this one verse. There was one line that just wasn't working. She would do one and I didn't like it, and I would do one and she didn't like it. Finally, I got a line that we both liked. But I wouldn't have gotten there without her nudging me and experimenting with all these other lyrics. She was doing the tune and she kept at me till we got the right words.

I was forty when I started writing songs and fifty when I met Candy Forest. She knew my mother's music and loved it and wanted to talk to me, so that's how we got acquainted. That's when I started getting serious about writing children's songs, because she had a small children's chorus. So, there was a place for the songs to go, which is stimulating! Sometimes I would write the words and she the music, and sometimes I would write both or she would write both. We produced three albums together.

A friend of hers, Nancy Fox, said, "You really should go to Laney and take some music courses." Laney is a junior college here in Oakland with a very good music department. And so, I went to Laney and learned some music theory. I took the basics and harmony and a course where you analyze different musical compositions. It really helped. And actually, my mother had done the same thing at just about the same age—gone back to college to take a few courses in music theory.

When she was signing up, the person signing her up said "You can't sign up for that course. You don't have the prerequisite." She said "I already have a PhD." And he said "Oh, well then . . ." She didn't say it was in English! [both laugh] She said that was the only time in her life that she used her PhD. [bigger laughter from both] Because when she got it, during the depression, she was a socialist, and she couldn't get a job.

What haven't we talked about yet that you want to talk about?

Marianne Barlow, Bonnie Lockhart, Betsy Rose, Nancy, Leslie Hassberg, Judy Fjell, and Hali Hammer singing one of Nancy's bee songs at her 80th birthday show *(Photo credit: Maureen Barnato)*

When I was touring doing storytelling, I was kind of specializing in stories with active women in them. Actually, I had started on that when I was a librarian. The Association of Children's Librarians in Northern California did a list of picture books and children's books that had strong women characters. Because, at that time, you looked at picture books and boys were doing things and girls were watching them. There was some good stuff, but we were trying to put it forward.

One more thing I want to say, that's not about me and not about my mother, but about CMN. I have made such good friends there and I have found such good songs! And I particularly want to mention "So Many Ways to Be Smart" [by Stuart Stotts]. Because I glommed onto it when it was first written because of the testing, and it's only gotten worse, and worse, and worse! And that's such a good answer to that. I went to a Kids and Creeks Conference here years ago—this wonderful organization that puts together kids and creeks—and what could be better?! You know, messing around in mud and learning about watersheds. So, they have this conference and these fifth graders were making a presentation to this whole auditorium of teachers and other grown-ups. In Marin County, they have a thing where you can adopt a species that's in trouble in some way.

So, their group adopted this freshwater shrimp that was having a hard time because they need shade in the stream to be able to live and reproduce. They were huddling under bridges, because the cattle were eating the vegetation along the streams. The kids' two jobs were to convince ranchers to fence off the streams and to plant native plants along the streams. Some of them were writing to the newspapers. Some were looking to talk to ranchers. Some were planting the native plants. And they had different committees.

So, I said, "I have two questions. One is: Have you had experience with committees? In school or in Scouts or anything like that?" "No, that just seemed like the way to do things, for people to do what they were good at or interested in."

And then I said, "This question is for the teacher: I've read about multiple intelligences; you probably have too, were you thinking about teaching this way?" And she said, "No, but you know, when you deal with the real world you need all the intelligences." Wow!

Is there anything else you want to say about your relationship to CMN?

I love that it exists! And that it is what it is! I really appreciate that it has stayed true to its roots in the People's Music Network—changing as things change, but keeping the core values.

Come celebrate Nancy Schimmel as she receives the Magic Penny Award at the CMN 2019 Annual International Conference[3]!

Special thanks to Mara Beckerman, Dorothy Cresswell, and Lisa Heinz for transcribing the interview.

1. https://childrensmusic.org/pass-it-on/authors/sally-rogers.aspx
2. http://occupella.org
3. https://childrensmusic.org/conference/
4. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-YnKUecTwY0
5. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CMiReDGqs3Q
6. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AvGd8vwWLpE

Planting Seeds of Love in South Sudan

in the words of Pam Donkin and Stephen Wandu Bimo

It all began in October 2018 with a post to the CMN online forum from new member Stephen Wandu Bimo:

Group photo of Bidibidi artists celebrating their success

> Hi everyone!
>
> I am the cofounder of an organisation called *I CAN South Sudan*, along with a lady called Angela Kyobutungi and a gentleman called Seme Ludanga. Seme and I are both refugees from South Sudan, while Kyobutungi is a Ugandan who has shown sympathy with refugees from South Sudan and has stood with us to help these children. We were inspired to set up I CAN South Sudan in 2017 when we became aware that many unaccompanied refugee children who had been orphaned or separated from their parents by the civil war that rages in my country were arriving at the Bidibidi refugee camp. Traumatised by conflict, flight, and the loss of family, and without a strong support network, we realised that these children needed our help and support. . . .
>
> As you probably know, conflicts between tribes are a major problem in the war that has decimated South Sudan, and one of the aims of our project is to bring together children from all backgrounds and encourage them to work together. . . . We foster musical skills in children and teach children both new and traditional songs. We are careful to make sure that the traditional songs come from many different South Sudanese cultures, for two reasons: firstly, we believe that this can help to heal some of the bitter tribal divisions that have led to civil war. Secondly, we want to give the children a sense of continuity, home, and identity as they learn to survive in a new country.
>
> We have now been running for 9 months, helping 20 children. We give them musical training but also help with additional basic needs (in short supply at the camp), school materials, and take them on recreational trips to help them heal.
>
> We have already been able to record some songs with the children—you can hear these on our website: www.icansouthsudan.com/i-can-childrens-music[1].

Stephen Wandu Bimo

However, we run on a shoestring budget: initial funding this year of just €5,000 helped us to start the project, but we are now in desperate need of further funds to continue the programme and ideally expand it to help more children.

We would like to request for your music to teach our children and possibly with your permission send it to South Sudan radio stations . . . that we partner with and that host children programs so that children from South Sudan can learn the songs to be used in schools. There is not much music in schools in South Sudan, only in few nursery schools who still use century-old songs. Your music can give them something new, and we will be ready to partner and create more children's music clubs in schools in South Sudan if this signed peace holds.

Pam Donkin

Many CMN members rushed to send songs to Stephen, for which he was very grateful. But he got more than songs from Pam Donkin, whose Planting Seeds of Love project turned out to be a beautiful fit for a partnership with I CAN Sudan. Here is the story of that partnership, told in their (lightly edited) words, and in the voices and faces of the children of I CAN.

Pam's video of her song, "Planting Seeds of Love"[7]

Stephen: In October 2017, when we started this initiative of engaging unaccompanied refugee children in social and musical activities, we never had any link to any organization using music as a tool to engage children. Deep down, we knew there might be an organization or people out there who loved working with children the way we do. We knew we could not achieve all our missions and goals alone and hence we needed friends, organizations, and partners to help us grow. We Google searched the words "Children and music" to be able to find organizations and partners to work with, but most responses were either negative or there was no reply at all.

On September 19, 2018, I was searching again through our Twitter account and found out about the CMN conference. I got interested and immediately went on to read from the CMN website, and that is where I found the great work CMN is doing. I also read members' comments about CMN—how it has helped them grow and achieve success with children.

I immediately wrote to Jane Arsham, telling her our interest in joining the network. Jane replied the same day and told us she had sent our message to the Board and they would like to offer us "online" membership at no charge to give us access to the song library and to *Pass It On!* We were happy for the quick and kind response. Jane also got us to the CMN forum. The financial support from members, the guidance on how to deal with children, the encouraging messages, the promotion of our music online, and the fundraising efforts by Valerie [Smalkin], all have made us to stronger.

Pam: Originally, Stephen found my song, "Planting Seeds of Love," through CMN. I found out that he had had it played on the radio! Later, when he posted that he was looking for some activities he

Planting Seeds of Love: The Early Seeds
by Liz Hannan

In 2006, Pam Donkin sent me a homemade CD with "Planting Seeds of Love" written on it. The minute I heard:

I am planting seeds of love in my heart
I am planting seeds of love in my heart

I knew this song was a piece of incredible magic.

I was presenting music in twenty-three circles each week for fifteen Montessori preschools. I told Pam I wanted songs that would reflect and extend the wonder, awe,

could do around music, I sent him an email directing him to plantingseedsoflove.com[4] where he could find lesson plans to go along with the song he was already using. The lesson plans had been sent to me by members of CMN when I originally set up the website.

Stephen: I CAN South Sudan has a "Children Peace Building Initiative" project for 2019 from which we would like to build peace among the South Sudanese refugee communities in Bidibidi: for reconciliation, forgiveness, unity, and love among the warring refugee community as we pray and wait for the implementation of Peace Agreement signed in September 2018. So this Planting Seeds of Love program can be used by us to plant seeds of love in the heart of the refugees through drawings, drama, and music.

Pam: Steven contacted me via email saying he had gone to the website and downloaded all the lesson plans and activities and had some questions. As it turned out, some of the activities required more water than was available and electricity, which they also did not have. So little by little, over about a week, we discussed what *was* possible and made a list of what items would be needed.

The children would need colored pencils, pens, and paper (blank art books) for completing the pages that would say: *I am planting seeds of love in my* _____. Or *I am planting seeds of* _____*in my heart* and so on. They would also need seeds to plant so their seeds of love could grow and be given to others in peacebuilding. When I was told by Stephen that they did not have seeds or those art supplies, I was filled with the feeling that I wanted these children, such strong children, to be able to express themselves through drawing and writing.

I offered to fund the cost.

My dream was to send "Planting Seeds of Love" into the world as a mission for peace and love, and this idea of helping the South Sudanese refugee community build peace with these children, in a country across the world, was literally a dream come true!

Stephen: We launched the project of Planting Seeds of Love in Bidibidi refugee settlement with thirty children. The children were taught the "Planting Seeds of Love" song, then shown on a laptop the video of the activities Pam had sent to us. We reminded them of the situation we as South Sudanese people have faced and how we can use this program to plant seeds of love among the refugee community in Bidibidi.

The children were given the freedom to draw, and the result of that was amazing. They drew houses, flowers, families, pumpkins, and more.

A child shows off artwork in progress.

and magic in the hearts, minds, and spirits of my children.

"Planting Seeds of Love" is the signature song in all of my preschool circles of music as well as my children's choir. It is sung at preschool performances for the winter concert, Mother's Day Tea, Family Day, Father's Day, and Graduation.

It has been shared and well received on Facebook groups I follow: the Bay Area Montessori Association, American Montessori Society, Association of Montessori Internationale, and over 200 owners, directors, and teachers who have attended my workshops.

Pam told me she felt she had been given a gift with this song, so she was "giving it back" by giving free downloads of the song on her websites and other online media.

When Facebook became the go-to place for networking, Pam created a Planting Seeds of Love group[2] (profiled in this issue's Let's Talk Tech column[3]). That gave her magical song a spotlight that continues to shine and attract new members who share other songs and activities.

Planting Seeds of Love continues to be shared around the world.

We asked the children what they would like to plant in their hearts, schools, communities, churches, country, etc. They came up with words like peace, love, unity, kindness, hope, joy, happiness, and wrote the words beside their drawings.

Young artists at work in Bidibidi

We asked the children to get containers to plant their seeds in and to draw a symbol of a heart and write the words "I am planting seeds of (love, peace, etc.) in my (heart, school, etc.)." to stick on their containers.

Pam: The Planting Seeds of Love book activity, in which children draw their pictures and complete the written pages, can usually be combined into a classroom book or a child's personal book to take home. In their case, due to lack of supplies, the I CAN children's pictures were instead photographed and put on video, which turned out to be a great way to adjust that activity for them.

Angelina Daniel, age thirteen, takes part in the Planting Seeds of Love program.[8]

Also, in Bidibidi, there is not enough water or seeds to make the Planting Seeds of Love garden, so the children made individual seed planters and decorated them with their paper drawings. Instead of a garden, they are giving the plantings to others, to further their goal of reconciliation!

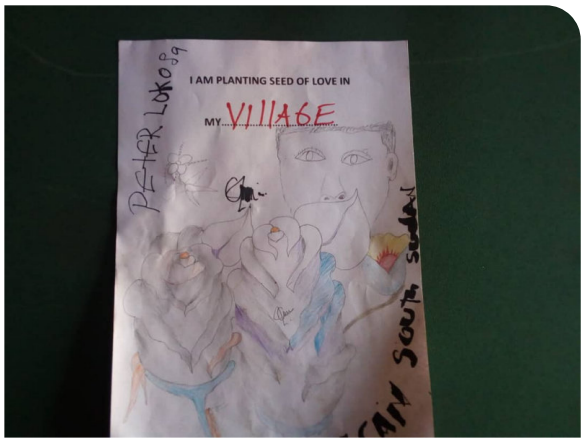
Stephen: Bidibidi is a rocky place with no immediate water source. Given this situation, it has been difficult to get water for irrigating the seeds planted by the children. It is also in total blackout with no source of power, only the use of a power generator. Challenges like these have only helped us to plan better and to see how best we can achieve the goal of the program, which is to build peace among the refugee communities.

Pam: In a way, I think the adjustments we made turned out better for this population. And the communication was easier than I could have imagined. Though we are on different time zones, using email and messenger we communicated very easily.

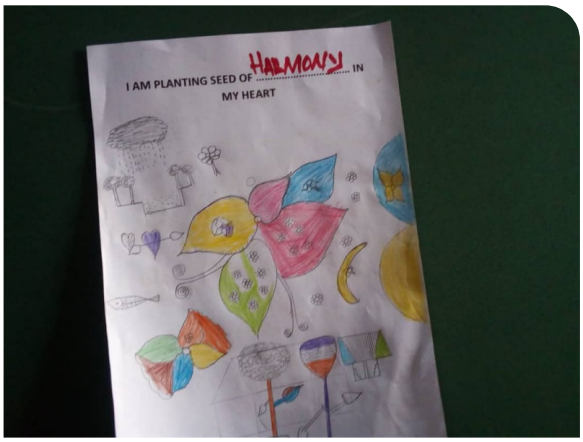
Stephen: Distance is not a barrier for a great idea to be implemented together. We have loved planning and discussing with Pam and getting her continuous guidance.

When we started Planting Seeds of Love, we concentrated mostly on music and didn't think of drawing as a tool to heal the children of trauma. But this program has now brought to our attention the hidden talent of these children. Some of these children are very good at drawing and we need to nurture this talent. The children enjoyed drawing together and were so excited to show each other what they have drawn. Their parents and guardians were also pleased when they saw the beautiful drawings, having never realized before what their children could do.

Finished activity pages with artwork and words filled in by the children:



I am planting seeds of love in my village.



I am planting seeds of harmony in my heart.

I am planting seeds of kindness in my heart.

I am planting seeds of unity in my heart.

Through this program, the children understood they need to have love, peace, unity, kindness, and joy in their community. As a result, they have already chosen places where to plant their seeds when they germinate, for example, in churches, schools, hospitals, neighboring homes, and homes of their friends. Unity, love, sharing spirit, and cooperation have grown among the children as they carried out the activities together.

We are glad some of the CMN members shared with us their music, and we will teach the children the songs so that they can sing along as they do the activities. Hence we need *more* music on peace, love, and unity, and music that can engage the children in social activities. We welcome other activities too that can be shared with us.

We would like to extend this program to schools and churches; hence, we call on CMN Community to join hands with Pam Donkin in the support of this program in whatever way possible.

Engaging other children in the same activities we are doing can bring a nice exchange between the children in USA and our children. We will all plant seeds of love in South Sudan.

Pam: Yes, I agree. And we'd love to see CMN members ask teachers in their schools to make the *Planting Seeds of Love* book and Planting Seeds of Love gardens and then take photos or make videos to share with the children of I CAN. We can all form bonds of peacemaking and support of our efforts in our own areas.

To share how you planted seeds of love in your community, please email Pam at pamdonkin@gmail.com[5] and/or Stephen at icankids829@gmail.com[6].

1. https://www.icansouthsudan.com/i-can-childrens-music
2. https://www.facebook.com/groups/300938783620361
3. https://childrensmusic.org/pass-it-on/columns/the-many-faces-of-facebook-groups.aspx
4. http://www.plantingseedsoflove.com
5. mailto:pamdonkin@gmail.com
6. mailto:icankids829@gmail.com
7. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XR0V16vwnyw
8. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fkW16GOoBJI

In Demand

Music Specialist for Children With Special Needs

by David Meyers[1]

David plays with a student who is learning bass guitar.

It's nine o'clock Friday morning. The creaking sound of wheels on my handcart is echoing off the elementary school's concrete block walls. Children walking by are staring at the load of instruments I am pulling. They smile and say, "Hello Mr. Dave." I smile back. Inside I am pinching myself, thinking, *How did I get here?*

For thirty years in my professional life, I had been a small business owner, working on construction sites or conducting property inspections. My music was a hobby, perhaps a day each month set aside to jam with friends. From time to time, I would teach guitar in the evening, though was never able to turn teaching into a consistent business model. But now I work as a music specialist five days a week, and I do not plan to go back.

How I Got Started

It's funny how life can throw you curve balls and point you in a direction you were not expecting. The myriad of unsatisfying accomplishments and economic failures kept pushing me to find new professional endeavors. While between jobs in 2008, I presented a guitar-learning program for various age groups at a local recreation department. My initial plan was to teach easy classic pop songs, for example, Credence Clearwater Revival's "Proud Mary" (aka "Rollin' on the River"). Everyone knows that song, right? Wrong! Most had not heard the songs I suggested. I soon realized I could not expect today's youth to be motivated by songs I grew up with. The next thought was to adjust the current pop songs to an easy play form. Wrong again! I was not able to find a song with acceptable, non-sex-related themes. Besides, the songs are quickly forgotten as new pop emerges.

Therefore, I needed to create my own songs that were motivational and easy to play. Each year they would be fresh for new students. So, I began creating what eventually became my curriculum of "Accessible Music."

The recreation program ran for several years but eventually interest waned, and it was discontinued. Then, a casual conversation during a party in 2016 would change my life. A friend was discussing the difficulties in finding recreation activities for their son, a ten-year-old child with autism. It was decided that I would try to teach him to play music.

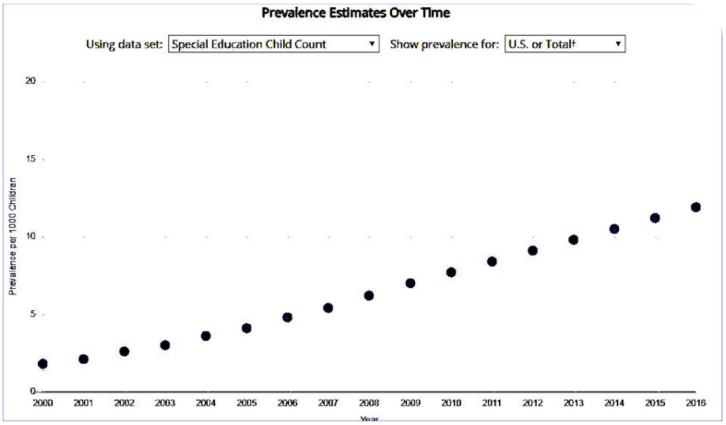
Not long after, I began to see the positive impacts. He seemed more outgoing, socially connected, and creative. If my special way of teaching could benefit

this one child, perhaps there was a wider application. So in 2017, I decided to reach out to other parents, teachers, and organizations who are providers for the special needs community to see if I could attract more students. Now I service more than fifty children each week through one-on-one and group music programs.

David and his students perform at the 2019 RockOn concert.

Growth Area

Anyone who works in public education knows the number of children in special education programs has skyrocketed. Data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) show an alarming trend. Their survey in 2014 showed the Identified Prevalence of Autism estimate was 1 in every 59 children, a 250 percent *rise* since 2000. The CDC also published data from the U.S. Department of Education, shown in the graph here. It reveals a *six-fold increase* in the prevalence of children receiving special education from 2000 to 2016. Wow! Locally, I found the availability for skills building and recreation activities that can accommodate special needs falls below the growing demand.



Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention[2]

A guardian of someone with a disability may be eligible for benefits paid through Medicaid. In my state (New York), this is administered through its Office for People With Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD). Approximately seven years ago, OPWDD began its Self-Direction program, which allows guardians to have more control over the activities and caregivers that work best for their children. The benefits of music for fine motor skill and language development are widely documented. Music is a recreational activity that can serve a client's long-term goals. If your music program is approved by a client's fiscal intermediary, its cost will be paid from their Medicaid budget. According to the NY State OPWDD, my region (Hudson Valley and Capital District) has seen a *three-fold increase* in Self-Direction enrollment in just over two years. At least forty states offer some form of Self-Direction service, so this is probably expanding in your area also. Much of my recent growth can be directly attributed to networking with parents, brokers, and administrators involved in the Self-Direction Program.

In early 2017, I took on another student on the autism spectrum, a high-functioning teenager whose family I was acquainted with. I invited them to my home studio. After taking a minute to chat with his mother, I discovered that the student had taken my guitars and precariously balanced them against a round, spinning stool. I lifted one guitar, then the stool became unbalanced and the instruments tumbled. A lesson learned. My cluttered studio was perhaps not the best environment for those with sensory overload. It was decided I would take my lessons on the road to the homes of the clients. This is a great benefit to the caregivers, as transporting children with anxiety or physical limitations can be a struggle.

Developing a Marketing Plan

Previously I had no experience or formal education in special education. Though my wife, Robin, works in this field, we did not experience special needs with our own children. However, it did not take me long to make connections. Many parents and guardians of children have already formed networking groups to share struggles and need for services, and to learn best programs and practices. There are many online forums, school functions, and nonprofit organizations created to share resources. Here is list of avenues I found to connect with potential clients and develop a market presence:

- Social networks, resource lists
- Special Education Parent Teacher Organizations (SEPTOs), Special Education Parent Teacher Associations (SEPTAs)
- Recreation programs
- Benefit brokers and institutions
- Local publications

Searching keywords on Facebook, I found several groups created for parents to share stories and resources. These groups may not be open to the public, but if you explain to the administrator how you can benefit the community, they may allow you to post on their pages. There are online resource guides published by municipal departments or local and national nonprofits. Many local school districts have separate parent-teacher organizations for special education students—a good place to make connections or even a presentation about what you do. I was also able to tap in to local organizations already providing group recreation for children with disabilities. These programs may run for six to twelve weeks at a time but are a great supplement to my private sessions.

New York OPWDD publishes a list of benefit brokers and administrators. They may be interested in finding suitable activities for their clients. Local publications and online neighborhood forums are always looking for feel-good community content. Write a press release on how you benefit the special needs community, and they may publish a story about you.

How to Connect to Your Students

My guerilla marketing skills from my years as a small business owner were helpful. But what is the key to my success and sustainability and keeping clients? *It's in the music.* My tools are my songs (and sometimes your songs) that are specifically arranged to be motivational and accessible to my students. If I can build their confidence and attention, they can start on a path to a lifetime of musical participation.

Autism on its face is a social disorder, so it may take a while for the students to connect to you and your music.

Here are some basic suggestions for lesson planning:

- Use lots of short activities to start.
- Keep students physically connected to an instrument.
- Structure songs to include responsive breaks.
- Choose songs that are physically and verbally accessible.
- Find out what motivates students and incorporate it into music.

Music intertwines melody and rhythm, cadence and meaning, structure and improvisation, expression and controlled emotion. This is a lot for a sensory-challenged individual to filter and respond to in the appropriate way. Children

with autism may need outside motivation to begin the journey into musical participation, whether it's through the use of humor, their pet, family, favorite food, or superhero, I suggest incorporating what they already love into the music so they can develop their own reasons for reacting.

"Be My Friend"[5]

Some of these concepts are found in my song "Be My Friend." It is based on open strings on the guitar for physical accessibility. The song structure has a repeating pattern with responsive breaks to go "Boom" or "Yeah." Lyrics include things such as pizza and Xbox games, which kids almost universally enjoy.

The Scoop

Here's how I'd sum up my work as an independent music specialist:

BENEFITS	**PITFALLS**
Fulfillment	Difficult scheduling
Consistent interest	Diverse lesson planning
Using others' facilities	Using others' facilities
Paid from benefit sources	Requires equipment maintenance
Limited competition	Physically taxing

In a little over two years, I have been able to set up a five-day-a-week schedule and declare that music is my full-time job! However, this came at the price of consistent effort. It didn't take me long to realize that my private lessons with children are limited to after school hours. To expand my workday, these are supplemented with group sessions sponsored by nonprofit recreation organizations. My marketing also attracted young adults who are home during school hours. My clients are of all ages and reflect a wide range of functionality. This diversity requires significant organization and lesson planning to suit the individual tastes and skill levels.

The feeling of fulfillment in bringing skills and confidence to a disabled individual is awesome. Because many have limited access to other recreation, my lessons are a highlight of their week. I do not have the liability of maintaining or renting my own facility. Many clients are reimbursed and do not pay out-of-pocket, so they would like me to come often. And I have not found any local competitors who perform this unique in-home service.

However, the job is not without difficulties—most notably, scheduling. As my immediate location is semi-rural, I travel throughout the northern New York suburban area from five to forty miles from my home. Putting together a workable schedule around the client's family lifestyle and activities is a challenge. Cancellations due to illness, doctor appointments, and weather emergencies are fairly common. I estimate 10 to 15 percent of my scheduled lessons are cancelled in a typical week.

The benefit of using another's home or facilities may be offset by sibling rivalries, pets, and life's messes that can interrupt the lesson flow. The instruments I provide may be accidentally abused, licked, smelled, scratched, bent, dropped, or used in ways you didn't know existed. Cleaning and fixing my instruments is now part of my weekly, if not daily, routine. In my old job, it was easy to "tough out" minor illnesses at work. Now I am more likely to stay away if I have a cold, as I work in such close contact with my clients. Also, I was not expecting that my new weekly routine would be so physically taxing. By the weekend, sore arms, shoulders, and throat are in need of rest.

What Does the Future Hold?

It was New Year's Day, 2017, when I made a commitment to pursue a career applying my music skills to benefit the special needs community. I am proud to say that in two years I was able to make this idea into a viable reality. However, I am still not sure what is the next step. Perhaps the knowledge base of CMNers can help.

Though I would like to do this all day and night, my body and voice can only perform so many classes each week. Though this supplies me with a moderate income, I want to continue to grow my cash flow as well as meet the growing demand. Could I expand and train others in my methods? Should I become a not-for-profit and pursue donations and grants for this worthy cause? Can I make money publishing my songs and articles about this topic? These thoughts are running through my head as I drive to my next lesson. I would love to hear yours, so please share them with me: dmeyers12531@gmail.com[3].

Want to hear some of the music David uses to capture attention and motivate children with autism? Attend his song swap at at the 2019 CMN Conference[4] in Arizona. Hope to see you there!

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1. https://childrensmusic.org/pass-it-on/authors/david-meyers.aspx
2. https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/data/index.html
3. mailto:dmeyers12531@gmail.com
4. https://childrensmusic.org/conference
5. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=20CeJgIfvDQ

Our Human Legacy

Enhancing Seven Generations

by Roman Orona[1]

The earth is but one country and mankind its citizens.
— Bahá'u'lláh

Dáanzho (Hello). My name is Roman Orona. I am Chiricahua, Lipan, and Jicarilla Apache; Taos and Isleta Pueblo; and Yaqui. I am a dancer, a singer, an actor, an educator, and a follower of the Bahá'í Faith. But most importantly, I am a human being and part of the bigger picture called Humanity. I want to share with you my thoughts on the Principle of Seven Generations and our collective responsibility to work for the betterment of all humanity.

The Principle of Seven Generations is from the Iroquois People and has been adopted throughout Indian Country and the world. This principle is about protection and sustainability. The Principle of Seven Generations is simple but very deep. It is this: We should all think of everything we do in our daily lives (decisions and actions) and how that affects seven generations into the future. What we do today—how does that affect our lineage, those babies who are not even born yet? Does it leave them a world that is pure and safe or a world of complete chaos and destruction? We should ask ourselves, "What's our legacy going to be for them?" Remember that one day we will be the ancestors to our particular culture and race. We all have a tremendous responsibility not only to the environment and animals we coexist with but also to each other. We have a responsibility to cultivate human virtues (love, modesty, unity, moderation, justice, honor, joyfulness, forgiveness, honesty, consideration, cooperation, caring, generosity, compassion, responsibility, etc.) and to carry forward an ever-advancing civilization.

As you may know, Native American communities had and still have a close relationship with all of the Creator's creation, but especially women and children. The women are held in high regard for being the first educators and carriers of the children. The children are the most precious treasure a community can possess, for in them are the promise and guarantee of the future. They have the seeds of the character of future society, which is largely shaped by what the adults do or fail to do with respect to children. They are a trust no community can neglect. An all-embracing love of children, the manner of treating them, the quality of attention shown to them, the spirit of adult behavior toward them—these are among the vital aspects of the requisite attitude. Love demands discipline—the courage to accustom children to hardship, not to indulge their whims or leave them entirely to their own devices. An atmosphere needs to be maintained in which children feel that they belong to the community and share in its purpose. We as parents are working so hard that we forget the importance of educating the children. A

fundamental role for every community should be to raise children with praiseworthy and virtuous qualities and capacities who will assume responsibility for their own spiritual growth and their participation in the ever-advancement of civilization. This will create a community, humanity, and world moving toward unity and peace.

"One People" by Roman Orona, Canyon Records. Translation: "Make all the hearts one; make us all one people." [6]

Our native people and culture are constantly depicted as things of the past, a poor people, a people with casinos, people who got a raw deal from the government, people who get everything for free, mascots, a costume, a barbaric people. But long before colonization, my people had urban populations well-versed in the arts and sciences, and they followed finely ordered systems of law. We provided numerous foods eaten on this earth today (corn, potatoes, beans, squash, etc.). We were using medications still used today and performing surgeries. We had sophisticated canal systems for our crops, drinking water, and waste water. We were a people of peace who just wanted to live on and take care of the land that we were provided by the Creator. I mention this because I believe it is important to know about people and know that my people are still here and alive performing our cultural traditions in a very contemporary world. In my recent travels to Malaysia, Thailand, and Japan, performing and giving talks, I got asked a lot of questions as to why I wasn't wearing feathers, why my face wasn't painted, and why I wear "normal" clothes. In a huge city in the United States, I was told "I didn't know your people still exist." I was completely surprised because comments like these were from educated individuals. So, since I have the floor, I want you all to know that we are alive and doing well. Something that I have learned in my travels and have been told by my elders is that all peoples come from a traditional foundation, whether your background is European, Asian, African, Native American. We are all tribal people!

My cultural prophecies have told us of this current time we are living in, with war and destruction, human atrocities, racial divisions, etc. We as humanity are at a turning point in the world, where our choices today can and will change the future course of civilization. The prophecies, and the teachers of the prophecies, have instructed us that we, as indigenous people, must speak of the dangers we face as a human race. We as humanity are entering a time of purification and can expect to witness chaos and destruction in all the kingdoms of nature. We are witnessing the Old World trying to remain while the New World Order is unveiling itself. A cleansing! How many of you have tried a body detox or cleansing? How many of you have tried to quit caffeine? It's not easy: the body goes through this shock with body aches, headaches, maybe some fever or hives. That is where we are in this world. Now is a time for the reuniting of the races. Barriers of religion and nationality will begin to fall as all people realize their essential unity. We must heal the damage done to Mother Earth, the source of life, and recognize that all living things are endowed with spirit. Native People don't worship animals, trees, mountains, etc. We honor them for the spirit within them and the sacrifice they give, whether it's the deer that provides clothing, tools, or food, or the tree that provides us shelter or wood for fire. We as Native people only have one God/Creator and that is the one we worship.

We were told that things will speed up. Grandchildren will not have time for grandparents. Parents will not have time for children. It will seem like time is going faster and faster. Do we not see that now? How many times have you have thought or heard, "Wow, I can't believe this day is almost done" or "This

year has flown by." The elders advised us that as things speed up, you yourself should slow down. The faster things go, the slower you go.

There's going to come a time when the earth will be shaken again. This earth has witnessed the shaking two times already: the First and Second World Wars reminded us that we are a human family, that we should have greeted each other as brothers and sisters. We had a chance after each shaking to come together in a circle that would have brought peace on Earth, but we missed that.

Now is the time to heal the past by truly listening to the centuries of pain and persecution, not in passing or by saying "that was the past, so get over it." Now is the time to join together and work in harmony to rehabilitate the planet and establish an era of alignment and peace. The very planet we live on is giving us signs. Earthquakes, fires, mudslides, tsunamis, hurricanes, flooding, droughts, etc. are signs that we humans have altered the earth as well.

Have we as humanity lost sight of our responsibilities?

Have we given up on creating true peace on earth and the building of this great civilization that has been foretold and even promised?

Why do we sit idle and wait for others to do something?

Why do we blame others for the problems that we all face as humanity?

Fulfilling the prophecies of peace on Earth and the building of the great civilization is not only possible but inevitable. Whether both are to be reached only after unimaginable horrors precipitated by humanity's stubborn clinging to old patterns of behavior or to be embraced now by an act of collective will is our choice. It cannot be left to a few to make the necessary changes. We all must have a say and consult one another if our efforts are to lead to the betterment of all.

#iamHuman Media Trailer[7]

Bahá'u'lláh, prophet of the Bahá'í Faith[2],*[3] promised that "these fruitless strifes, these ruinous wars shall pass away, and the Most Great Peace Shall Come." For the sake of the next Seven Generations, the time to act is now.

We are all connected because:

It is all of our responsibility: Let's leave this world better than we found it for our collective future generations.

Ahíyi'é (Thank you).

Roman Orona and family will open the CMN 2019 Conference[4] with music, stories, poetry, and a blessing of the Native ancestors.

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* The Bahá'í Faith teaches that throughout history, God has sent to humanity a series of divine Educators—known as Manifestations of God—whose teachings have provided the basis for the advancement of civilization. These Manifestations have included Abraham, Krishna, Zoroaster, Moses, Buddha, Jesus, and Muhammad. Bahá'u'lláh, the latest of these Messengers, explained that the religions of the world come from the same Source and are in essence successive chapters of one religion from God. (www.bahai.org[5])

Bahá'ís Believe in:

One God
The oneness of humankind
Independent investigation of truth
The essential harmony of science and religion
Equality of men and women
Elimination of prejudice of all kinds
Universal compulsory education
Spiritual solutions to economic problems
A universal auxiliary language
Universal peace upheld by a world federation

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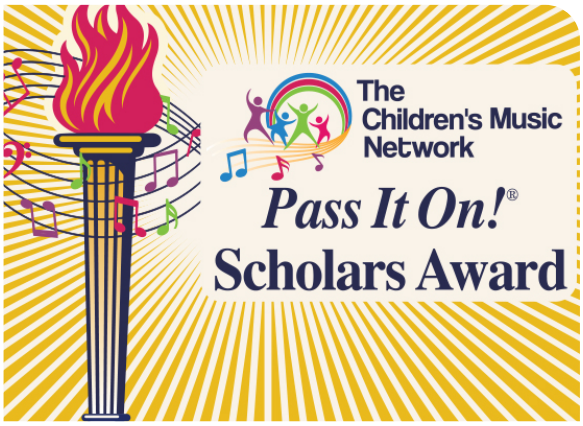
1. https://childrensmusic.org/pass-it-on/authors/roman-orona.aspx
2. https://www.bahai.org
3. https://childrensmusic.org#footnote
4. https://childrensmusic.org/conference
5. https://www.bahai.org
6. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-s3yawFlBXk
7. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ao9QuEq9QKg

Singing New Stories

by Sophia Bereaud[1]

The Pass It On! *Scholar Award is given each Fall to a high school senior, university, or college student selected by CMN's* Pass It On! *Project Reviewers as the candidate most likely, throughout their lifetime, to continue celebrating the positive power of music in the lives of children* and *to recognize the importance of networking and sharing knowledge, music, ideas, and songs.*



Sophia fits the description perfectly. A Massachusetts native and Emory University sophomore, she has been singing in CMN Round Robins since age ten. She was gifted the simple seed of singing by her parents, both of whom make music with children for their living and occasionally do so in family band format. Though her professional path is still unfolding, she is inspired by the teachers and creators around her—at CMN and beyond—to harness the power of music as a tool for social good.

We at CMN share a fervent belief in the power of musical narrative. We gather in Round Robins to share the stories most poignant to us—stories of friendship and courage, of history's heroes, of the journeys of seeds and birds and magic pennies. In my years singing with CMN and in the Boston Children's Chorus (BCC), the practice of musical storytelling was accompanied by persistent and powerful follow-up questions:

Which narratives do we share?

Whose stories do we sing?

If music is such a powerful medium for translating lived experience, can't it be used to elevate marginalized voices?

Sophia Bereaud

The BCC brought together an ethnically diverse group of youth to sing through a repertoire drawn from all over the world. Once we'd learned the translation of our Mexican Christmas song "*Abreme La Puerta*" and talked through the original coded messages in the spiritual "Wade in the Water," those traditions were no longer foreign or unknown—we had developed cultural and historical competency through song. I discovered that, with music as a common denominator, children can come to understand and appreciate narratives that don't exist in their own homes.

Heading into my college years and beyond, I have accepted the responsibility that offers itself to those who follow this belief to its actionable conclusion—the promise to use music as a tool for social equity. I want to take the issues that are thought of as *too big* or *too political* for children and find a way to approach them with music, from a foundation of empathy and shared language. I believe we wildly underestimate the level of nuance and maturity children develop to discuss unfamiliar topics, especially when such conversations take the form of song. In performance with my father, Philip Alexander, we've introduced audiences to Spanish language and food with simple song and dance. I have seen how strophic narratives like Sally Rogers's "What Can One Little Person Do?" and revived Civil Rights-era anthems, like "Ain't Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me 'Round," can both engage children in historical discussion and empower them to carry on the legacy of the heroes in their songs. I aim to do the same work around issues of marriage equality, gender identity, and environmental action. I want to find and write songs that connect listeners to these concepts on the level of emotion rather than intellect, so children practice speaking and singing from a place of empathy.

While my professional musical interests are growing and changing, I know that in any subfield—be it ethnomusicology, composition, or music therapy—I will be driven by the basic belief that music can and should work as a catalyst for social change. I will use the common language of song to share stories of *the other* because once children have sung a story, it isn't quite so "other" to them anymore.

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1. https://childrensmusic.org/pass-it-on/authors/sophia-bereaud.aspx

Montana, Colorado, Nevada

words by Nancy Schimmel[1] and music by Nancy Schimmel and Judy Fjell[2]
© 2004 Nancy Schimmel and Judy Fjell

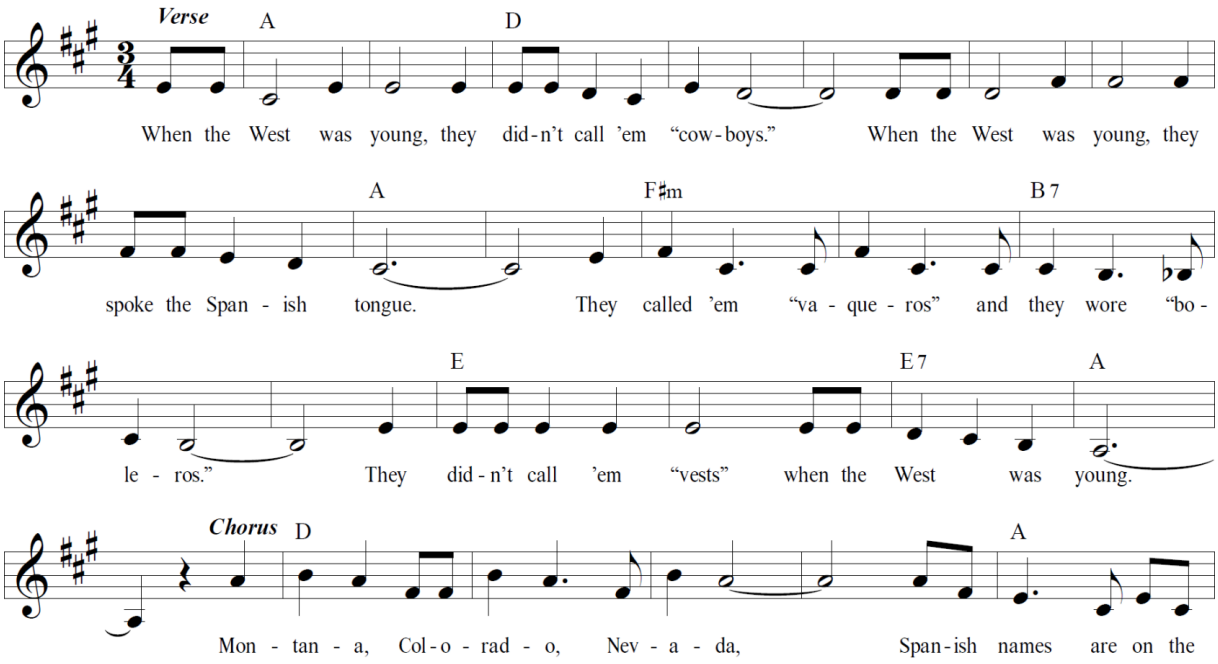
0:00 / 3:40

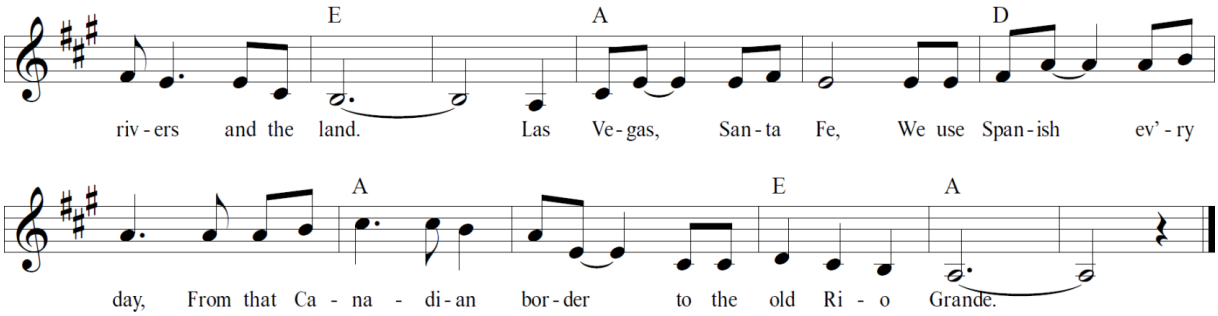
Nancy Schimmel, our 2019 Magic Penny honoree, shares "Montana, Colorado, Nevada" with us, a song with thoughtful humor that highlights the existing diversity in our nation. She says:

"I wrote the song thinking about the folly of the 1986 state proposition declaring English the 'official' language of California. The proposition, clearly xenophobic, passed. Never mind that our state capital is Sacramento, the first capital was Monterey, and our largest cities are San Francisco and Los Angeles.

"I wrote it with Judy Fjell, who lives in Montana, where I have visited her many times. We were going to do an album of songs about the West and recorded this and other songs on one of those visits about ten years ago, but life intervened. It's just now coming out as a general children's album called *I Think of a Dragon*.

"Oh, and my process was to find on the Internet a list of Spanish words absorbed into English and choose from them what worked in the song."


Verse
A
D
When the West was young, they did-n't call 'em "cow-boys." When the West was young, they
A
F♯m
B 7
spoke the Span - ish tongue. They called 'em "va - que - ros" and they wore "bo -
E
E 7
A
le - ros." They did - n't call 'em "vests" when the West was young.
Chorus
D
A
Mon - tan - a, Col - o - rad - o, Nev - a - da, Span-ish names are on the



Verse:
When the West was young, they didn't call 'em "cowboys."
When the West was young, they spoke the Spanish tongue.
They called 'em "vaqueros" and they wore "boleros."
They didn't call 'em "vests" when the West was young.

Chorus:
Montana, Colorado, Nevada,
Spanish names are on the rivers and the land.
Las Vegas, Santa Fe,
We use Spanish ev'ry day,
From that Canadian border to the old Rio Grande.

If you ever used a lasso to rope a palomino,
In a chaparral canyon where coyotes call,
If you didn't have a little Spanish in your language,
Well, you wouldn't understand what we're singing at all.

Chorus

If the mustangs stampede and you have to corral them,
If you slap a mosquito, or wear a bandolier,
If you show off your skill at a rodeo on a bronco,
You already savvy Spanish 'cause it's right at home out here.

Chorus

If you tell me desperados are camped behind the mesa,
While a puma lurks above them in an old piñon tree.
Staring at their burros who are grazing on alfalfa,
You may think you're talking English, but it's español to me.

Chorus

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1. http://www.sisterschoice.com
2. https://judyfjell.com

Apache Stretching Song

music by Roman Orona[1] and words by Roman Orona and David Burba
© 2007 Music, Movement & Magination, Inc.™

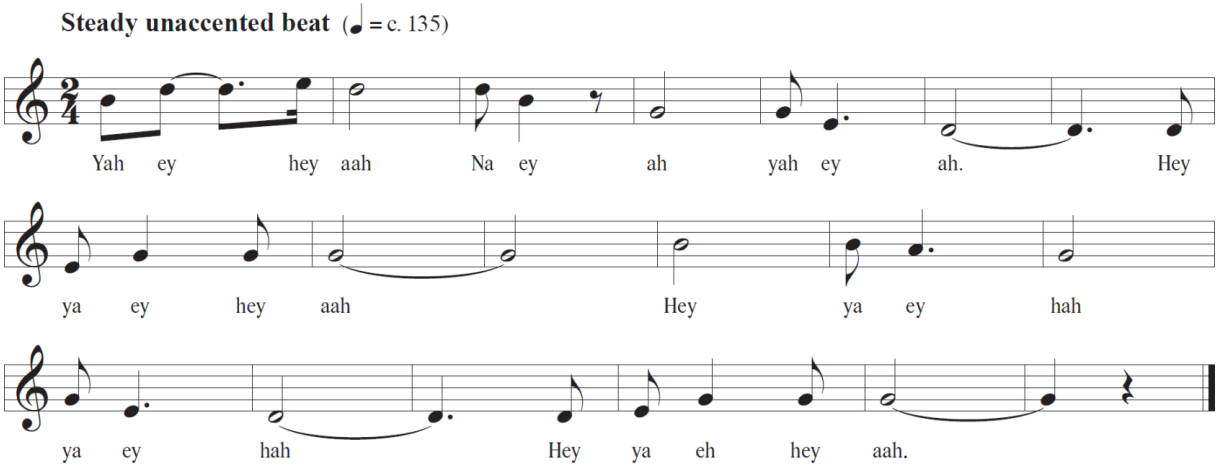
0:00 / 3:30

Internationally known dancer, singer, actor, and craftsman, Roman Orona opened the Children's Music Network 2019 Annual International Conference in Scottsdale, Arizona, with a ceremony to honor the ancestors who walked the land of the Franciscan Renewal Center long before future European-descended generations were even imagined. *Ish hish itsaatsu* is his Apache name, meaning "One Who Dances With Eagles." His goal is to teach balance in all aspects of life, world peace, equality of men and women, environmental and cultural preservation, racial equality, and the abandonment of all forms of prejudice. Roman works to illustrate that all individuals are related through the common thread of humanity. In being human, Roman says, "we all have a responsibility to each other, for each other, for the betterment of all humankind."

The Children's Music Network seeks to honor both Roman and Native American culture by sharing Roman's unique contributions to children's music. His "Apache Stretching Song" and "Native American Counting Song" broaden all children's horizons and can help non-native peoples raise consciousness about the debt owed Native American brothers and sisters.

The Apache Stretching Song is made up of vocables without a particular meaning; still the strong, even rhythm communicates peaceful movement. With Roman's permission we have notated the melody and vocables below. It is important to stress the even, unaccented beat of Native American songs, and to combat the Europeanized version heard in so many western movies, e.g., THUMP, thump thump thump/THUMP, thump thump thump.

Thank you, Roman Orona, for sharing your knowledge with everyone.



LYRICS	MOVEMENTS
Native American Chant . . . Come, and have fun as we move our bodies and exercise to this Native American Song. Listen to my directions then move to the rhythm as I sing, and be ready to freeze in place. First, let's warm up by stretching our bodies like a tree in the wind. As we stretch back and forth with our arms in the air. Ready? Set? Go!	Hop 2 times on each foot, alternating feet to the beat.
Native American Chant	Arms up high and stretch and sway body back and forth while hopping 2 times on each foot alternating feet to the beat of the chant.
Freeze! Great Stretching! It is always good to stretch our bodies before we exercise. Now, let's get our heart to beat faster. So get ready to run in place like a mountain lion chasing his friends. Ready? Set? Go.	Freeze in place! Listen to the words. . .
Native American Chant	Run in place with hands out front like lion claws to the beat of the chant.
Freeze! Good running! Your heart is getting stronger with every beat. Let's keep our heart rate going as we jump in place, like a rabbit hopping in the desert. Ready? Set? Go.	Freeze in place! Listen to the words . . . Place hand over heart and feel the beating.
Native American Chant	Hop up and down with pointer fingers on top of head like rabbit ears to the beat of the chant.
Freeze! Can we feel our heart beating fast? We now need to slow our hearts back down by taking deep, slow breaths, like a wave in the ocean. So put your arms up and down as we breathe in and out. Ready? Set? Go.	Freeze in place! Listen to the words . . . Place hand over heart and feel the beating, take deep, slow breaths.
Native American Chant	Stand still and move arms slowly up and down while taking deep breaths.
Freeze! Great job! Thank you for exercising and moving to the rhythm with me. I am looking forward to the next time when we do this again. Bye for now!	Freeze in place! Listen to the words . . .
Native American Chant	Hop 2 times on each foot, alternating feet to the beat.

Download and print a Lyrics & Movements Worksheet[2] for this song.

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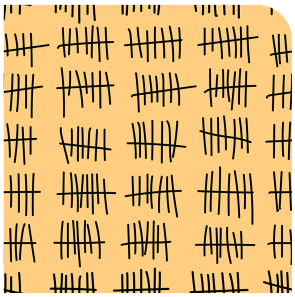
1. https://www.romanorona.com/medicine-arrow
2. https://childrensmusic.org/pass-it-on/images/songs/apache-stretching-song/Apache Stretching Song Worksheet.pdf

Native American Counting Song



music by Roman Orona[1] and words by Roman Orona and David Burba
© 2009 Music, Movement & Magination, Inc.™

0:00 / 3:00

The "Native American Counting Song" is spoken rather than sung, using the strength of the steady, unaccented beat to reinforce and cement, as it were, the numbers in a child's mind. We hope you will enjoy using these materials in the multitude of creative ways you will invent!

LYRICS	**MOVEMENTS**
Music Intro. . . *Children, come and join us for a teaching song that uses Native American rhythm. Listen to the flute, drums, and rattle which will lead the way in this fun counting song. I will say the first set of numbers and you will say the next set of numbers. We will count until we get to 20. Ready? Let's go!*	Have the children stand in a circle and have them walk or march around the circle to the beat of the music and during talking parts.
1 – 2 – 3 – 4 **(5 – 6 – 7 – 8)** 9 – 10 – 11 – 12 **(13 – 14 – 15 – 16)** 17 – 18 **(19 – 20)** ***Flute interlude . . .***	Have the children finish the number sequence and follow the instructions of the song.
Great job! Now let's try it again but this time stomp your feet when you say your numbers. Ready? Let's go!	Repeat walking or marching around the circle to the beat.
1 – 2 – 3 – 4 **(5 – 6 – 7 – 8)** 9 – 10 – 11 – 12 **(13 – 14 – 15 – 16)** 17 – 18 **(19 – 20)** ***Flute interlude . . .***	Have the children finish the number sequence and follow the instructions of the song.
You guys are great counters. In this round, our final round, I want you to try to stomp your feet and at the same time, click your sticks. Ready? Let's go!	Repeat walking or marching around the circle to the beat.

1 – 2 – 3 – 4 **(5 – 6 – 7 – 8)** 9 – 10 – 11 – 12 **(13 – 14 – 15 – 16)** 17 – 18 **(19 – 20)**	Have the children finish the number sequence and follow the instructions of the song.
Wow! You guys are wonderful counters! Thank you very much for joining me in this song today. Bye-bye! ***Flute interlude . . .***	Repeat walking or marching around the circle to the beat.

Download and print a Lyrics & Movements Worksheet[2] for this song.

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1. https://www.romanorona.com/medicine-arrow
2. https://childrensmusic.org/pass-it-on/images/songs/native-american-counting-song/Native American Counting Song Movement Sheet.pdf

Under the Chair

words by Malvina Reynolds[1] and music by Tracy Newman[2]
© 2014 Schroder Music, ASCAP, and Kabeauty Music, BMI

0:00 / 2:05

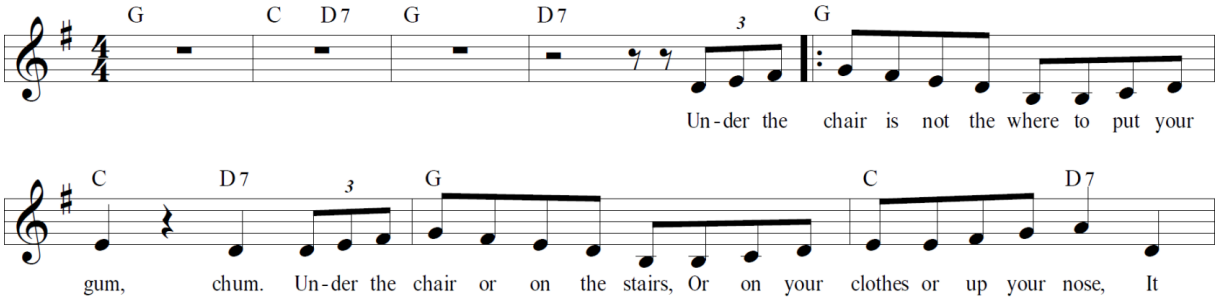
New member Tracy Newman, from Los Angeles, was a founder of The Groundlings Improv Theatre, which is one of the main farm companies for *Saturday Night Live*. She was a TV writer/producer for sixteen years, starting as a staff writer on *Cheers*. In 1997, she won an Emmy and Peabody Award for co-writing the groundbreaking "coming out" episode of *Ellen*. Her story of writing the music to Malvina Reynolds song "Under the Chair" is inspirational. Tracy says:

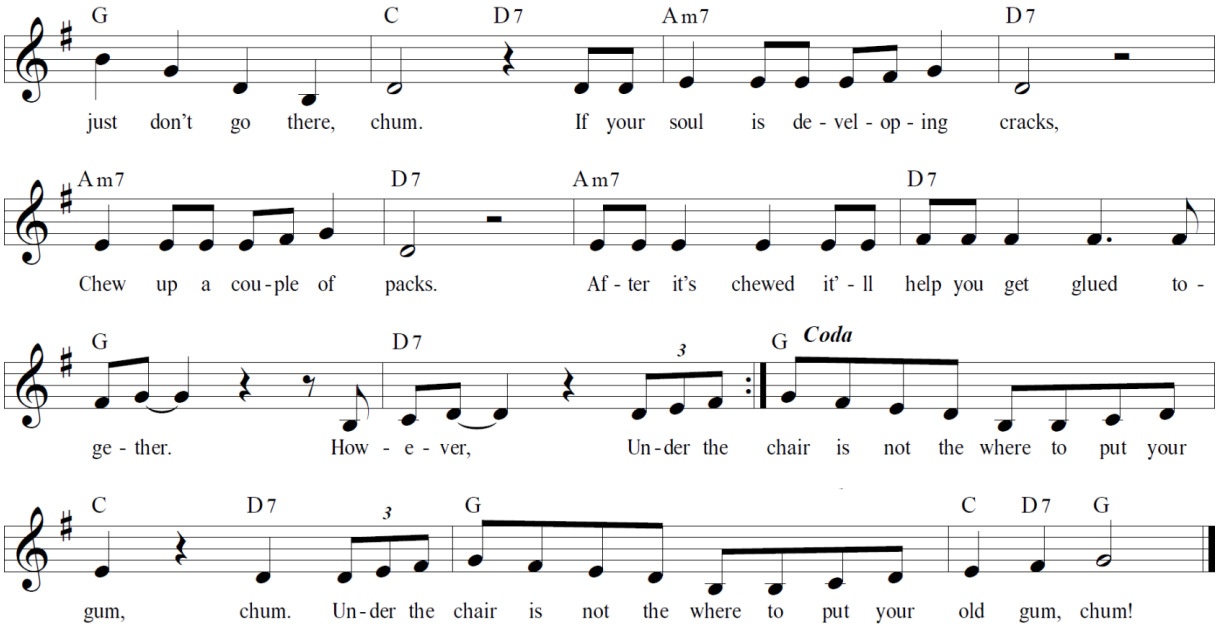
"You know how sometimes we get obsessed with time, and say nutty things like 'If I don't have a hit record by the time I'm thirty, I'm done'? Well, Malvina Reynolds wrote a song called 'Little Boxes' when she was sixty-two! Malvina didn't even start *writing* songs until she was in her forties! If that doesn't give you hope I don't know what will.

"I met Malvina in the early 1970s in Los Angeles, through singer/songwriter Marcia Berman. [Read about Marcia in the history of CMN[3]. In 2000, she was the second recipient of the Magic Penny award. Malvina was the first.] Malvina lived in San Francisco, but her rigorous performing schedule brought her to LA often. For some reason, Malvina gave me lyrics to put music to: this one, 'Under the Chair,' and another called 'Deep Water.' Both terrific.

"Unfortunately, being young and a bit irresponsible and very scattered, I didn't understand what an honor that was, and even though I *did* put music to 'Under the Chair,' *I never bothered to send the finished product to Malvina!* I know. I look back on that now and realize it's a sad comment on the value I placed on my own writing. I put a melody to 'Deep Water,' too, but didn't think it was any good, and had no real understanding of rewriting, so I just tossed the lyrics into a pile of unfinished stuff and forgot about it.

"Cut to 2014. I was seventy-one and recording my first album for children. The CD was almost done when I stumbled across Malvina's wonderful lyrics for 'Under the Chair,' along with the chords I'd added to it long ago. After noodling with it a bit, I remembered my melody! I thought, 'This is perfect! What was I ever thinking?'"


G C D7 G D7 G
Un-der the chair is not the where to put your
C D7 G C D7
gum, chum. Un-der the chair or on the stairs, Or on your clothes or up your nose, It


G C D7 Am7 D7
just don't go there, chum. If your soul is de - vel - op - ing cracks,
Am7 D7 Am7 D7
Chew up a cou-ple of packs. Af - ter it's chewed it' - ll help you get glued to -
G D7 G Coda
ge - ther. How - e - ver, Un-der the chair is not the where to put your
C D7 G C D7 G
gum, chum. Un-der the chair is not the where to put your old gum, chum!

Under the chair is not the where to put your gum, chum.
Under the chair or on the stairs,
Or on your clothes or up your nose,
It just don't go there, chum.
If your soul is developing cracks,
Chew up a couple of packs.
After it's chewed it'll help you get glued together. However,

Under the chair is not the where to put your gum, chum.
Under the chair or in your hair,
Or in the stew or on your shoe,
Don't put that goo there, chum.
If your heart is developing nicks,
Chew up a couple of sticks.
Every stick will glue all the nicks together. However,

Under the chair is not the where to put your gum, chum.
Under the chair or in the air,
Or on your bum or on your thumb,
It's just plumb dumb there, chum.
If your noggin is splitting in two,
Chew up some sugary goo.
One little bit and your noggin will knit together. However,

Under the chair is not the where to put your gum, chum.
Under the chair is not the where to put your old gum chum!

Tracy recorded the song and contacted Nancy Schimmel (Malvina passed away in 1978 and Nancy handles her catalogue) to work out the publishing. Tracy's daughter, Charlotte Dean, was inspired to draw a coloring book page for the song. Tracy loved it, so she had Charlotte draw a page for every song and released a coloring book with the CD, called *I Can Swing Forever*.

Tracy concludes, "Here it is 2019, and maybe I don't have a hit record, but I do have a CD and a coloring book for children that I'm very proud of, and a clear understanding that age truly is just a number and shouldn't stop you from doing anything you want to do. As for 'Deep Water,' the other song Malvina gave me, well, I've been rewriting the melody for years, and think I've finally got it right. I will record it soon."

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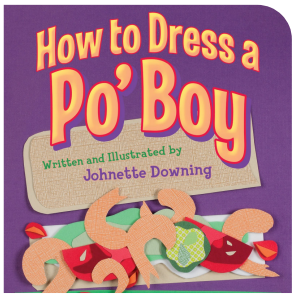
1. http://malvinareynolds.com
2. https://www.runalonghome.com
3. https://childrensmusic.org/pass-it-on/features/preserving-the-history-of-the-early-years.aspx

Songs | Fall 2019

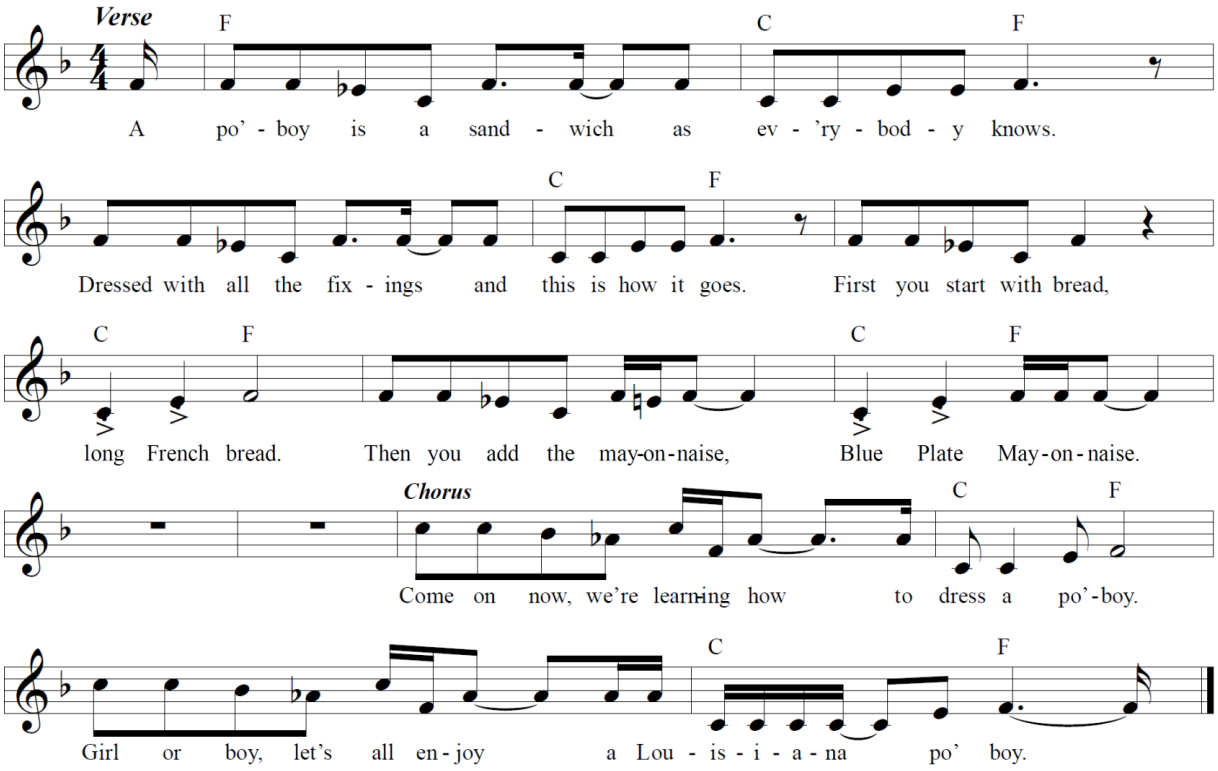
How to Dress a Po' Boy



words and music by Johnette Downing[1]
© 2010 Johnette Downing, Wiggle Worm Records, ASCAP
administered by Concord Music Publishing

0:00 / 2:55

Johnette Downing, the "Pied Piper of Louisiana Music Traditions," shares this original song dedicated to a sandwich. Johnette is a multi-award-winning musician, singer, and author whose presentations are thoroughly engaging. She explains "How to Dress a Po' Boy" as follows:

"In New Orleans, when you order a po' boy sandwich, you will be asked if you want it 'dressed.' The chef is not asking you if you want to put pajamas on the sandwich, he or she is asking you if you want it prepared with lettuce, tomatoes, pickles, and mayonnaise. A former early childhood music educator, I wrote this song and book to teach children, step by step, how to create this classic meal. Just don't say you want your po' boy undressed; that's just silly. The book, which includes the history of po' boys, is published by Pelican Publishing Company."

Verse
F C F
A po' - boy is a sand - wich as ev - 'ry - bod - y knows.
C F
Dressed with all the fix - ings and this is how it goes. First you start with bread,
C F C F
long French bread. Then you add the may-on-naise, Blue Plate May-on-naise.
Chorus
C F
Come on now, we're learning how to dress a po'-boy.
C F
Girl or boy, let's all en-joy a Lou - is - i - a - na po' boy.

Verse:
A po' boy is a sandwich as everybody knows.
Dressed with all the fixings and this is how it goes.
First you start with bread, long French bread.
Then you add the mayonnaise, Blue Plate mayonnaise.

Chorus:
Come on now, we're learning how to dress a po' boy.
Girl or boy, let's all enjoy a Louisiana po' boy.

Lay down a bed of lettuce, leafy green lettuce.
Follow with tomato, sliced Creole tomato.
Perk it up with pickles, sliced dill pickles.
Spice it up with hot sauce, Louisiana hot sauce.

Chorus

Then you top it off with meat, any kind of meat—
Shrimp, catfish, or soft-shell crab.
Roast beef debris, or Italian meatball,
Crawfish, or sausage, or alligator.

Chorus

Then you put it all together, yeah you right.
Now your po' boy is dressed so take a bite.
Ooo-wee, ee-ee eee, ee-ee, eee-eee-eee.
Ooo-wee, ee-ee eee, ee-ee, eee-eee-eee.

Chorus

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1. https://www.johnettedowning.com

Jack's House

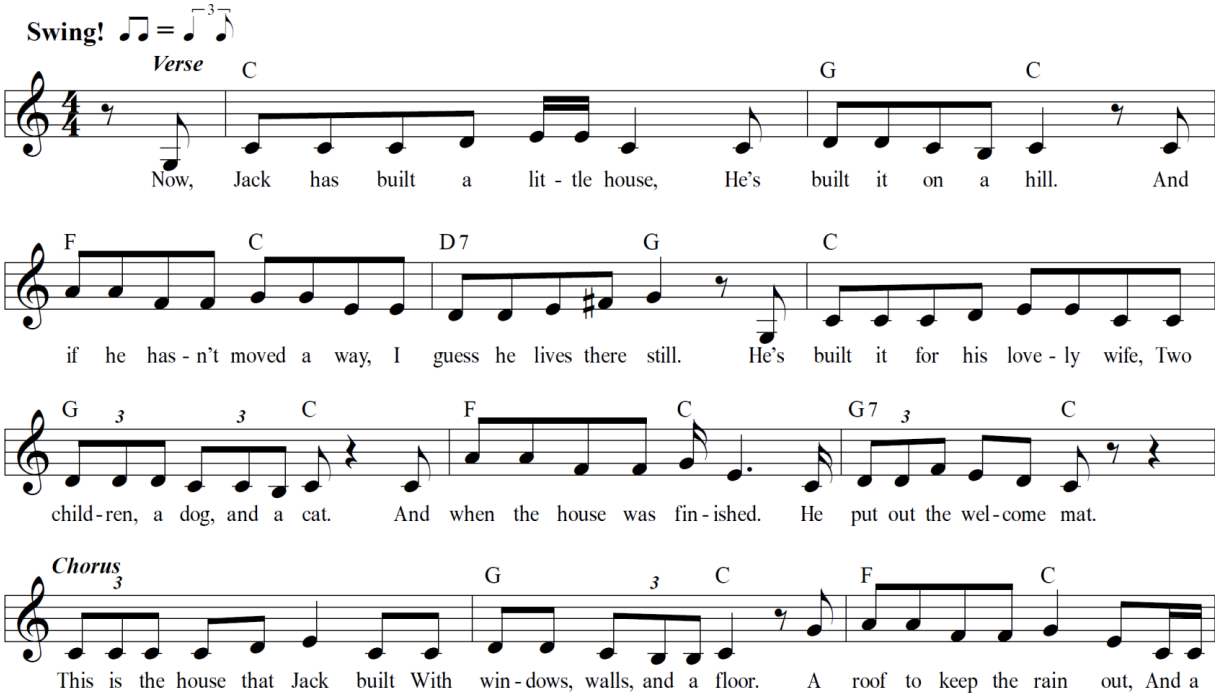
words and music by Kathy Reid-Naiman[1]
© 2003 SOCAN

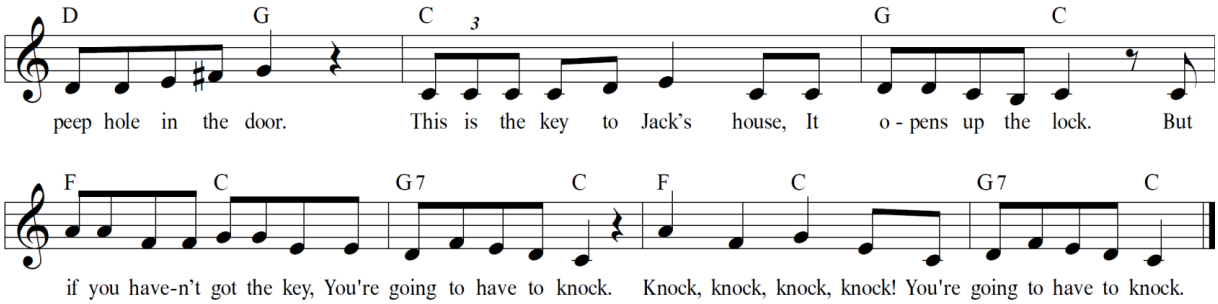
0:00 / 1:44

Kathy Reid-Naiman is the queen of irresistible fingerplay songs. She tells us she was "thinking about traditional rhymes and what qualities made them endure through centuries of children. The main thing, to my mind," she says, "is the imagery, the way the words describe what you are hearing in a simple way that evokes a picture in your mind.

"So, I decided to write a traditional rhyme using the same words in a different way that could also be described using my hands. I included many clichés to try to make it sound old. I started with the house. . . . And of course, it had to be Jack's house. *This is the house that Jack built.* Then I had to describe it. . . . It had windows, walls, and a floor. It had a roof to keep the rain out . . . and a peephole in the door (that is the giveaway line that tells you that this wasn't written very long ago). Since I was already thinking about the door, it made sense to have a lock on it, so it needed a key.

"The fingerplay seemed complete and stayed that way for a few weeks until I started thinking about where the house was and who lived in it. So, it evolved into a song. When I use it in my classes and concerts, I always teach the fingerplay without the tune first. That way, once listeners have heard the first verse sung, they are ready to sing the same tune and do the fingerplay."


Swing!
Verse
C G C
Now, Jack has built a lit - tle house, He's built it on a hill. And
F C D7 G C
if he has - n't moved a way, I guess he lives there still. He's built it for his love - ly wife, Two
G C F C G7 C
child - ren, a dog, and a cat. And when the house was fin - ished. He put out the wel - come mat.
Chorus
G C F C
This is the house that Jack built With win - dows, walls, and a floor. A roof to keep the rain out, And a


D G C 3 G C
peep hole in the door. This is the key to Jack's house, It o - pens up the lock. But
F C G7 C F C G7 C
if you have-n't got the key, You're going to have to knock. Knock, knock, knock, knock! You're going to have to knock.

Verse:
Now, Jack has built a little house,
He's built it on a hill.
And if he hasn't moved away,
I guess he lives there still.
He's built it for his lovely wife,
Two children, a dog, and a cat.
And when the house was finished,
He put out the welcome mat.

Chorus:
This is the house that Jack built
With windows, walls, and a floor,
A roof to keep the rain out,
And a peephole in the door.
This is the key to Jack's house,
It opens up the lock.
But if you haven't got the key,
You're going to have to knock.
Knock, knock, knock, knock!
You're going to have to knock.

Now, Jack has built a little house,
Put carpets on the floor,
Put curtains on the windows,
And he's painted the walls and the doors.
He's built a cozy fireplace
To keep them from the cold.
And there they live quite happily,
Or so I have been told.

Chorus

This is the house that Jack built

With windows walls and a floor,

A roof to keep the rain out

And a peep hole in the door.

This is the key to Jack's house

It opens up the lock

But if you haven't got the key

You're going to have to knock

Download and print a Lyrics & Movements Worksheet[2] for this song.

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1. https://www.kathyreidnaiman.com
2. https://childrensmusic.org/pass-it-on/images/songs/jacks-house/Jacks House Movements.pdf

Tumba

words and music traditional
additional words by Joaquin Liebert

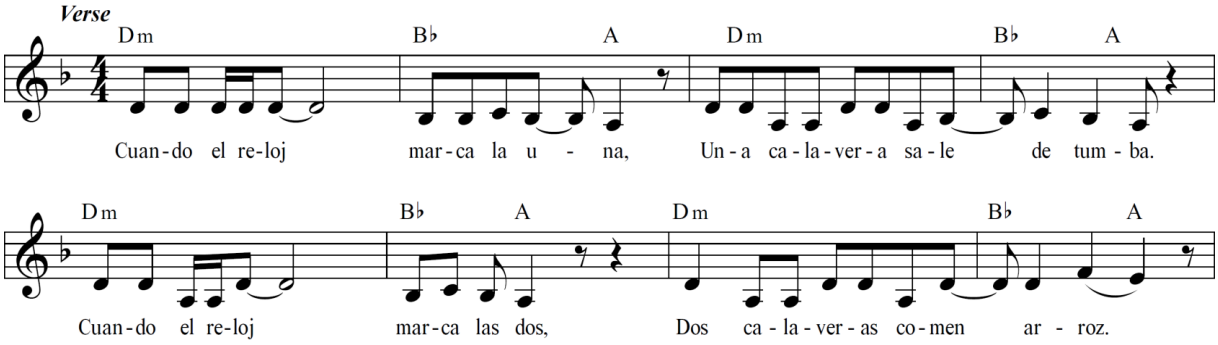
0:00 / 2:41

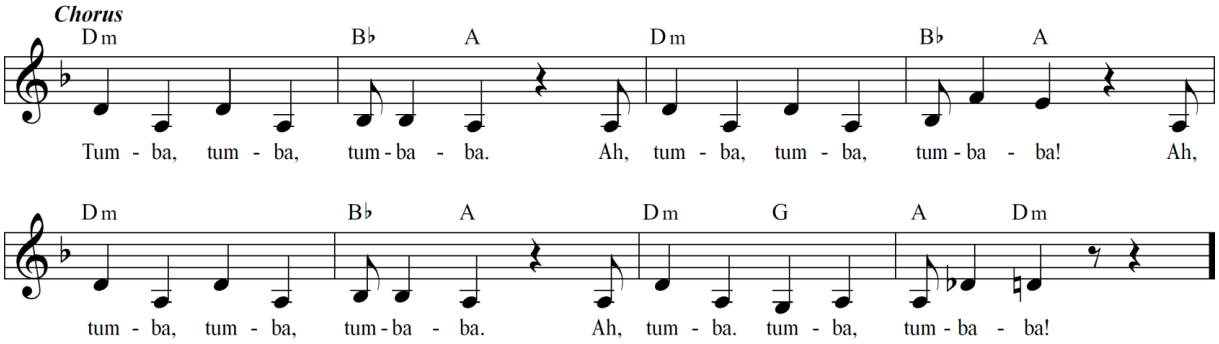
Joaquin Liebert introduced this song to us at the 2018 CMN Conference. As he says, the "Tumba, Tumba, Tumba-ba" chorus is immediately singable. The silly actions of the skeletons or skulls are a direct invitation to dance and frolic! Joaquin tells us:

" 'Tumba' is my version of the children's songs '*Los Esqueletos*' and '*Las Calaveras Salen de Su Tumba.*' Originally from Costa Rica, this Spanish language song moved to other Latin American countries and took on a life all its own. I call my rendition simply 'Tumba.' It is a tune associated with the holiday *Dia de los Muertos* (Day of the Dead) and is a great Halloween song as well. It is a fun simple counting song that counts to ten.

"When the clock strikes a certain hour, that is the number of skeletons that come out of the tomb, dancing and doing other fun actions like going to the theater, eating cake and rice, and even riding a rocket ship. There are many different choruses to the song but my chorus is simply 'Tumba Tumba Tumba-ba' making it easy for all to sing along no matter what their native language.

"My tempo is fast with a syncopated Latin feel. In the end it moves even faster to a high-energy blue-beat Jamaican jazz rhythm, making it difficult not to dance and move. My *calaveras* (skulls) are truly enjoying their time out of the tombs and hopefully anyone who hears the song will as well."


Verse
Dm B♭ A Dm B♭ A
Cuan-do el re-loj mar-ca la u - na, Un-a ca-la-ver-a sa-le de tum-ba.
Dm B♭ A Dm B♭ A
Cuan-do el re-loj mar-ca las dos, Dos ca-la-ver-as co-men ar - roz.



Spanish

Verse:
Cuando el reloj marca la una,
Una calavera sale de tumba.
Cuando el reloj marca las dos,
Dos calaveras comen arroz!

Chorus:
Tumba, tumba, tumba-ba! (4x)

Cuando el reloj marca las tres,
Tres calaveras se vuelven al revés.
Cuando el reloj marca las cuatro,
Cuatro calaveras van al teatro!

Chorus

Cuando el reloj marca las cinco,
Cinco calaveras se pegan un brinco
Cuando el reloj marca las seis,
Seis calaveras se agarran sus pies!

Chorus

Cuando el reloj marca las siete,
Siete calaveras se montan en cohete.
Cuando el reloj marca las ocho,
Ocho calaveras comen bizcocho!

Chorus

Cuando el reloj marca las nueve
Nueve calaveras juntos se mueven
Cuando el reloj marca las diez,
Diez calaveras bailan a la vez!

Chorus

English

Verse:
When the clock strikes one,
The skull comes out of its tomb.
When the clock strikes two,
Two skulls eat rice!

Chorus:
Tumba, tumba, tumba-ba! (4x)

When the clock strikes three,
Three skulls turn around.
When the clock strikes four,
Four skulls go to the theater!

Chorus

When the clock strikes five,
Five skulls jump together.
When the clock strikes six,
Six skulls grab their feet!

Chorus

When the clock strikes seven,
Seven skulls ride on a rocket.
When the clock strikes eight,
Eight skulls eat sponge cake!

Chorus

When the clock strikes nine,
Nine skulls move together
When the clock strikes ten,
Ten skulls dance together!

Chorus

English translation by Val Smalkin

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Let's Talk Tech

The Many Faces Of Facebook Groups

by Alina Celeste[1]

Facebook, everyone's online local newspaper, has become a hub for another old idea made new: interest groups. Where you once might have met once a week at a cafe or private home to discuss songwriting, knitting, basket weaving, hockey, fishing, books, or what have you, now you can talk about your passion of choice any time you want on a Facebook Group.

Facebook Groups have become extremely popular since their launch, around 2005. By early 2010, there were 620 million Groups indexed by Facebook (O'Neill, 2010[2]). By October of 2018, more than 1.4 billion people had joined some Facebook Group or other. Of those, 200 million people belonged to a group they interacted with every day (Homes, 2018[3]). Facebook Groups have become an essential way that people connect with each other.

I myself am a member of several in which professionals across the country help each other with ideas, advice, lesson plans, and experiences. Facebook Groups can help keep interests and communities alive with interaction at any time of the day or night and create a sense of community among people with shared interests, no matter how far flung they may be. They are a niche world inside a niche world, and they are booming. How, you might ask, does one go about starting a group and keeping it alive?

> **"Facebook is no longer a sort of encyclopedic database, but a living, breathing, social experience."**

Peace, love, and joy, and songs and lessons that promote them, have always been important in the work of member Pam Donkin, as her song "Planting Seeds of Love[4]" perfectly captures. In January of 2015, she launched the Planting Seeds of Love website[5] in order to share her song and related lesson plans, as well as other songs and accompanying resources that promote and teach those themes. She wanted to create a place where fellow educators, musicians, librarians, and other people who work with children could share and learn from each other.

Facebook permanently and fundamentally changed how people use the Internet. It is no longer a sort of encyclopedic database, but a living, breathing, social experience. Pam saw the opportunity to spread her message further and wider than a single website could ever do, and in September of 2016, started the Planting Seeds of Love Facebook Group[6]. As of this writing,

the group has 463 members. It has blossomed into a positive, supportive community that shares ideas, art, music, and lesson plans that all promote love and understanding. It is a shining example of the best aspects of what social media can do.

PLANTING SEEDS OF LOVE
Home
Find Friends
Create
PLANTING SEEDS OF LOVE
Public group
About
Discussion
Members
Events
Videos
Photos
Files
Search this group
ANTING SEEDS OF
+ Join Group
More
Join this group to post and comment.
Announcements
Pam Donkin shared a link.
January 18, 2017
Welcome to Planting Seeds of Love Facebook Group.
This is a group interested in promoting love, peace, joy and song for and to children and the adults who interact with them, including caregivers and teachers. We will share ideas, songs, activities and lesson plans for Planting Seeds of Love and other songs in a similar vein. Please invite your friends.
For free mp3's, music notation and multiple lesson plans go to... See More
DESCRIPTION
This is a group interested in promoting love, peace, joy and son... See More
GROUP TYPE
General
RECENT GROUP PHOTOS
See All
The Planting Seeds of Love Facebook Group page

I spoke to Pam about how she came to start the group and what she did to help it grow. As with anything that grows, it started pretty small. She merely wanted to reach more people with her message and resources for peace. Initially, she invited friends to join via Facebook. She said, simply, "This is a group interested in promoting love, peace, joy, and songs for and to children and the adults who interact with them, including caregivers and teachers. We will share ideas, songs, activities, and lesson plans for the song 'Planting Seeds of Love' and other songs in a similar vein."

The sharing began. Pam and early members like Susan Salidor, Dorothy Cresswell, and Kevin Kameraad began sharing their favorite and often original songs of love and peace. The group now gets roughly ten to twenty unique posts a month, as well as comments, discussion, and shares. It has become exactly the sort of resource Pam hoped for, but more than that, it has become a place to share and celebrate hope and love—essential ingredients to any life.

The best part of all? Anyone with a Facebook account can start a group, or several! If you'd like to start one, check out this easy tutorial on Facebook groups[7]. Or, a simple Facebook search will help you uncover existing groups that cater to your interests. With so many users, there are myriad groups! However, a word of caution: if you join too many groups, you'll be overwhelmed with posts and are unlikely to develop any meaningful connections or experiences. Facebook allows you to join up to 6,000 groups, but there is not yet a social media tool that makes that a possible number of communities to keep up with! Focus on the topics and communities that mean the most to you, and if one group doesn't appeal after a while, leave it! Many groups are public, which means you can join simply by clicking Join; others require an approval process or are private. After clicking Join for one of those, you will likely have to wait for an administrator of the group to approve you.

> **"The Planting Seeds of Love Facebook Group has become a place to share and celebrate hope and love—essential ingredients to any life."**

The simplest way to find a group is to click on the Discover Groups tab on your personal Facebook profile. The Facebook algorithm will recommend groups to you based on your interests and other organizations you may have already joined. You can also scroll through various topics and find relevant groups for each subject.

There is one other kind of Facebook Group, and that is the secret kind (cue mysterious music). You can't find them via a general or public search; in fact, the only way to join one is to be invited by an existing member. These can be great for planning surprise parties or keeping proprietary content safe, for example, if a group were developing a program together that they weren't ready to share with the world. However, Facebook Groups really shine when people like Pam Donkin and the other members of the Planting Seeds of Love Group create inclusive communities to share peace and love with the world at large. Check them out!

Has this column planted a seed of interest about Pam's work? Check out this issue's feature on Planting Seeds of Love[8] and learn how she partnered with I CAN Sudan to bring the program to refugee children in Uganda.

Want to talk more tech? Send column ideas or comments to Alina at alina@alinaceleste.com[9].

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1. https://childrensmusic.org/pass-it-on/authors/alina-celeste.aspx
2. https://www.adweek.com/digital/google-now-indexes-620-million-facebook-groups
3. https://www.forbes.com/sites/ryanholmes/2018/10/29/are-facebook-groups-the-future-of-social-media-or-a-dead-end/#7738cc6e1d23
4. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XR0V16vwnyw
5. http://www.plantingseedsoflove.com
6. https://www.facebook.com/groups/300938783620361
7. http://www.postplanner.com/how-to-create-a-facebook-group
8. https://childrensmusic.org/pass-it-on/features/planting-seeds-of-love-in-south-sudan.aspx
9. mailto:alina@alinaceleste.com

Music In Bloom

Wonder and Surprise

by Maureen Conlin[1]

Music is in bloom this fall as young children blossom and grow through the songs they sing each day. When we as early childhood music educators provide children with age-appropriate songs that encourage them to sing together, make up their own lyrics, or move to the music, we spur their growth in so many areas of development. We inspire those young minds when we "sing like nobody's listening," explore different instruments, and share songs that teach them about science, math, language, history, and art. When children sing, they sing for us all.

There are many resources for parents and early childhood educators to help make this possible for young children. The Children's Music Network is one of those wonderful resources. Often a member will share a simple song through the listserv or on Facebook, and that song will take flight into many creative directions. A member will write a simple song about a bunny; you share it and encourage children to hop to the music, and before you know it, a three- or four-year-old is suggesting they should be frogs or fish or wiggly worms, and the song morphs into something wonderful and new.

Providing young children with a variety of different rhythm instruments and letting them explore the different sounds opens a pathway to learning that extends into a steady beat or simple rhythm patterns. Sharing with children the appropriate way to handle the rhythm instruments is also important. Start with egg shakers so they understand that instruments can be fragile or broken like an egg when they bang them together or on the floor: "They are shakers not breakers."

Use a simple verse to encourage exploration such as:

> Found sounds, found sounds,
> Sounds are everywhere
> Found sounds, found sounds,
> Listen you will hear.

While children sit in a circle, invite each child take a turn to share the sounds that they find playing their rhythm instrument.

When we hear children singing together, those voices reflect the wonder and innocence that is so delightfully unique in children. When a child makes up a song or melody, expresses different emotions when they sing, or acts out a song, it is a very special gift for the listener. Again, they are singing for us all.

Provide opportunities for children to:

- Make up their own songs
- Express emotion
- Use body and mind together to integrate movement with music and song

Three- and four-year-olds have very creative imaginations, and when they make up songs, all sorts of new characters are born. Children can become dinosaurs, such as a Johnasaurus or a Caitlynadactile. Maybe even a Tenzinadon. Then they stomp their feet and tell you in the song how they move through the forest or in a cave.

> Johnasaurus moves like this *(child creates a movement to go with his dinosaur name)*,
> His thorny tail goes swish, swish, swish.
> The Caitlynadactile moves to and fro *(child creates a movement)*,
> Watch her twirl and watch her go.
> But Keishatops can really roar,
> 'Cause she's a happy dinosaur.

Children can sing up and down the C major scale using animal sounds to explore the highs and lows in their voices. Guide them to sing going up the C major scale using these lyrics:

> "C" there is a cat, "D" there is a dog
> "E" an elephant, and "F" I hear a frog
> "G" is a giraffe, and "A" an alligator
> "B" a big brown bear, and now I'll see you later.

Children can sing down the C major scale using animal sounds such as a cow, a cat, or any animal that they want to mimic.

Provide an activity for children to listen to one another. If they are shy and feeling a little inhibited about getting up in front of a group of other children, ask them to choose a singing partner to join them. Ask them to sing one of their favorite songs or play the game using a shoe box with several slots in the top and craft sticks placed into the slots. On one end of the stick is written the name of a simple song the child can sing or a sticker that might represent a song, such as a dog for "BINGO" or a farm animal for "Old MacDonald had a Farm." Each child pulls out a stick, then sings whatever song they think the sticker or picture represents.

Let your own imagination fly with this one as you come up with ideas for what goes on the craft stick, and watch how much fun it is to see how the children interpret it.

I leave you with this verse and encourage you to continue guiding children on their musical journey.

> Singing for us all are the children we see each day
> Listen to those voices as they take flight and fly away
> The joyous sound we hear that makes our spirits rise
> As children blossom and bloom in wonder and surprise.

Tell us how you've been making children blossom and bloom in your classroom! Email Maureen at happynotes@aol.com[2] with comments or column ideas.

1. https://childrensmusic.org/pass-it-on/authors/maureen-conlin.aspx
2. mailto:happynotes@aol.com

Pro Song

Songwriting Geeks Love Critiques

by Monty Harper[1]

Let's talk about that essential, yet often dreaded phase of songwriting—collecting feedback. No, I don't mean the squeal indicating your mic is too close to the speakers, although a few writers may emit similar sounds when faced with the idea of getting their work critiqued.

It may be especially tempting for us children's songwriters to depend entirely on our audience for feedback. Kids, after all, are brutally honest, and they don't hide their reactions. When you sing a song in front of kids, you'll know whether they find it boring, confusing, hilarious, or energizing.

On the other hand, when a kid tells me, "Those were the best songs I ever heard!" I know this may be coming from someone who just saw their very first live singer, so I take it with a grain of salt. Also, your audience won't tell you why they react the way they do, or give you any hints about how to improve your song.

So while I pay close attention to audience feedback during shows, I also seek more formal sources of critique to help my songs live up to their full potential.

Critique Doesn't Mean Criticism

If your experience is typical, you may hold a negative view of critique. A poorly handled critique session can crush your creative spirit. Well-intentioned *helpers* often give unhelpful responses, ranging from telling you what they think you want to hear, to pushing your song in a direction you don't want it to go, to offering sharp, unconstructive criticism.

> "Regularly engaging with critique is the fastest way I know of to grow as a songwriter."

A proper critique, on the other hand, should leave you feeling empowered and excited about improving your song. Regularly engaging with critique is also the fastest way I know of to grow as a songwriter. The good news is it just takes a bit of training to turn any willing helper into an invaluable critique partner.

My Preferred Five Steps

Here are the five steps I like to follow in a critique session, as adapted from Liz Lerman's Critical Response Process[2]:

1. Your partner listens to your song and reads the lyrics.
2. Your partner gives at least two or three affirmations.
3. Your partner answers your specific questions.
4. Your partner asks you questions about the song.
5. Your partner makes suggestions.

Taking these steps in order will help you avoid the pitfalls I described earlier, though you can always jump backwards as needed.

Starting with a positive exchange allows you and your partner to relax into the process. Knowing which parts of your song are appreciated will help you feel more open to changes elsewhere. The affirmations in Step Two are specific, positive comments or neutral observations, with no *buts* allowed. "I loved it" is too general. "I like the intro, but it could be shorter" is not positive. "I noticed the verses switched to second person," and "The red wagon makes an excellent, vivid image," are both helpful affirmations.

In Step Three, ask specifically about any aspect of your song you suspect may not be working. "Does the third line make sense? Can you explain it to me in your own words?" Then if you wish, move on to more general questions. "Were any lyrics confusing? Are there parts of the melody you can still hum?" Politely keep your partner focused on answers to your questions. They'll get an opportunity to raise their own concerns later, once they've gained a better understanding of your goals for the song.

> **"Don't force your opinion on anyone who doesn't really want it. Freely give affirmations, but ask permission before making a comment that might lead the writer toward changing their song."**

After getting your questions answered, you may feel you've gleaned all you need from the session. However, there's no reason to shy away from Steps Four and Five. If your partner isn't bursting to speak, give them some time to think. This may be a good moment to review the lyric, or re-sing a portion of the song.

In Step Four, your partner's questions may start you thinking more deeply about aspects of the song you hadn't considered. A question like, "Why did you include your dog in verse three?" might help you realize that the dog is just a distraction, or might inspire you to put the dog in verse one instead.

In Step Five, if you'd rather not open yourself up to any old suggestion, you can request that your partner ask permission each time. For example, "May I suggest an alternate approach for the ending?" Then if you really aren't interested, you can avoid some frustration by declining the offer.

Prepare for Your Session

Before scheduling a session, select a song that represents your best effort, but is new enough that you're open to making changes. Then get your partner on board with the process. You might share this article, or write up your own version of it, to let them know exactly what you're asking for and what to expect. Acknowledge that the rules of engagement may feel awkward at first. Let them know the process comes highly recommended, you think it will help you get the most out of their time, and you'll talk them gently through it.

Before you begin a session, be ready to sing your song or make a simple, clear recording for your partner to react to. Provide lyrics on paper so they can take

notes. Write out all the questions you plan to ask. Of course, you can ask additional questions as they come up, but you don't want to find yourself drawing a blank.

Peers, Songwriting Circles, and Classrooms

While your spouse or best friend can be very helpful, it's also good to seek diverse opinions from critique partners who bring different skills and perspectives to the table.

A fellow songwriter makes a great critique partner and one to whom you can return the favor. Be aware that some writers may expect to receive songwriting credit if you use words or melody they suggest. Be sure to agree ahead of time whether it's okay for them to suggest specific changes, and if so, whether they will receive songwriting credit for their contributions.

Your local songwriters' group may offer another good source of critique. If they haven't organized around a particular process, you can get your five steps in without imposing them on others. Just request they respond by answering your questions. Let them know your song is for kids so they can evaluate in the proper context. Build as many of the five steps as you want into your list of questions. For example, ask "Were there any bits you particularly noticed or liked?" in order to get some affirmations. When it's your turn to critique, don't force your opinion on anyone who doesn't really want it. Freely give affirmations, but ask permission before making a comment that might lead the writer toward changing their song.

If you know a local teacher, offer to give their students a mini-concert in exchange for some feedback. Most teachers will jump at the chance. The same five-step process works great with kids. Do talk them through it briefly before sharing the song so they can be thinking about affirmations and questions to ask. For younger kids, it can be helpful to use the word "likes" for "affirmations" and "wishes" for "suggestions."

> **"No matter how wonderful I think my song is when I first call it finished, I'm always amazed at how much better I like it after a few good rounds of critique."**

I once collected feedback from a group of second graders on my song "The Day I Took My Dragon for a Walk." They giggled to the point of distraction at a line I didn't think was that funny, so I asked them about it. When I sang, "Kids were running all directions but I only saw their tushes," I thought it was a clever way of saying kids were running away from me. But the second graders were picturing bare tushes. Needless to say, I revised!

Professional Songwriting Coaches

You can always find someone online willing to take your money for a professional song critique. This can bring a level of scrutiny to your writing that you may not be able to get from your friends or peers. Be sure to vet your options before prying open your pocketbook. Do you actually like the person's songs? Are they familiar with children's music? What is their critique process—is it one-sided, or will you be able to ask questions? Can you get a reference from a past client?

I've received excellent critiques in the past through SongU.com[3]. And in case you're wondering, I do offer professional critiques myself.

Final Thought

Sometimes I hear writers express the fear that thinking too critically will take all the magic out of their songwriting. Of course, you should turn off that

critical inner voice while writing a first draft, and the free flow of creativity can certainly feel magical. But for me, the real magic kicks in during revisions. No matter how wonderful I think my song is when I first call it finished, I'm always amazed at how much better I like it after a few good rounds of critique.

Gather your courage and ask someone to critique your latest song. I'd love to hear how it works out for you! Let me know at monty@montyharper.com[4].

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1. https://childrensmusic.org/pass-it-on/authors/monty-harper.aspx
2. http://danceexchange.org/projects/critical-response-process
3. https://www.songu.com
4. mailto:monty@montyharper.com

Thoughts To Chew

Ah-ha! Songs

by Stuart Stotts[1] and Peter Alsop[2]

Peter: The theme for this issue is "Singing *for* Us All," which has a different emphasis than "Singing *With* Us All." That "with" part is so needed these days, because so many kids and families and friends sit together staring at our individual smartphones, unaware of our surroundings. I think we singers for kids and families do more sing-alongs *with* audiences than any other performers. It's healthy for us to do communal activities with one another in actual, real, non-virtual groups! When we sing together, everyone gets to experience what it feels like being in a community larger than just ourselves or our family.

Stuart: And we get to see and know all the other people who participate in our community, the folks who actually show up here with us.

Peter: Right! I like the word *for* in the theme, because as a songwriter, I'm really interested in song content. Whenever I write or perform a song, I ask myself, *What's this song about? Who am I singing for? And why am I singing it for them right now?* The answers I come up with most frequently are that I hope to communicate some of the lessons I've learned in my life to my audience. I hope that when the song is over, people will have some tools in their toolbox that weren't there before. The song can be entertaining and humorous and deep and touching and beautiful, and at the same time, provide either some information or experience as a reminder for those who already know the lesson, or a new comprehension for those who have never really thought about it. And all of this helps me consider the bigger picture: the culture that surrounds the specific ideas in the song.

Stuart: I've been thinking about our conversations about songwriting, and I know we want to focus this column on the idea of "the Twist." Not the Chubby Checker version, but the idea of having something unexpected at the end, where the chorus takes on a new meaning. It's a common concept among songwriters, and it has particular meaning when we talk about songs for kids and families. My friend Peter Berryman, a fantastic lyricist, says that one-third of the work of a song can be coming up with a satisfying ending.

Peter: Absolutely! I love writing what I call "Ah-ha!" songs. I write about very specific kid activities in the early verses, and paint rich behaviors and experiences of kids in families or schools, and then by the third verse, plop those same insights into the land that parents and teachers and other adults inhabit.

Stuart: And that provides a larger context. For many years, songwriters have pursued final verses that open up the idea of the song. In pop music you have

"Cat's in the Cradle" by Harry Chapin, where what the dad has been saying to his son comes back to him: "My boy was just like me." Other songs include "Lola," "Escape (The Pina Colada Song)," and "A Boy Named Sue." It's as if the camera zooms out and you see the bigger picture.

Peter: Right, and it builds awareness. I try to make the choruses for this genre of song simple and singable. The payoff comes when we re-hear the chorus, which at first we thought applied only to the specific incidents for children in the first two verses, and then upon hearing the third verse, we see that it's relevant to the adults in that kid's life. The parents and teachers hear the chorus with a new perspective that includes them in the mix. That's the Ah-ha! moment.

Stuart: I've written plenty of songs where the chorus gives the big idea, and then the verses are each examples of that idea. One good thing after another. But these songs with twist endings can be satisfying to listeners in a different way. I have a few songs that use the twist at the end. "Jenifer Montgomery," which was recorded by Two of a Kind, would be one example. "Different Choice" would be another.

Peter: You wrote that back in 1993 right?

Stuart: Yep. It was actually inspired by hearing a very similar story from a friend. When your kids are young, you're always trading parenting stories, for humor, for support, and for learning. This story comes from my friends Peter and Betsy.

Peter: That's a great song. Let's show them your lyrics!

Different Choice
words and music by Stuart Stotts
© 1993 Stuart Stotts

Verse:
Ricky and Clare are my kids
I watch them most of the week
Rick's five and Clare's three. They like to test me.
So I've had to learn parenting techniques.

I've listened to talk show advice,
Read books, and spoken with friends
If I took what I've learned from wherever I've turned
This is how it would condense.

Chorus:
Show them you love them a lot
Speak in a moderate voice
Tell them specifically what you don't like
And come up with a different choice

So if Ricky is pulling Clare's hair
Or Clare steals a toy from Rick's box
I ask them to quit, and together we sit
At the table to listen and talk.

Chorus:
I try to show them I love them a lot
I speak in a moderate voice
I tell them specifically what I don't like
We come up with a different choice.

Bridge:
Some days we do that a lot
That's my job as a dad
I wish we were perfect but we're not
It usually works out not too bad.

Yesterday Rick broke a rule
Tried to stuff a balloon in his mouth
I yelled at him "Drop it, or I'm going to pop it
And every balloon in this house."

Rick looked a little bit stunned.
He dropped that balloon right away
But later that night before I turned out the light
He said, "Dad, I've got something to say."

Chorus:
"I know that you love me a lot
But I'm frightened when you raise your voice
It felt really bad when you yelled at me Dad
You could have made a different choice."

Bridge:
I knew that Ricky was right
I wondered just what to do
Whatever your parenting's like
It's bound to come back to you

Chorus:
I show them I love them a lot
I speak in a moderate voice
I tell them specifically what I don't like
We come up with a different choice.

I try to show them I love them a lot
I speak in a moderate voice
If I forget and get really upset
They might help me make a different choice.

Listen to "Different Choice"[3] on YouTube.

Peter: That is so excellent! All parents can relate to feeling frustrations while being responsible for kids. We have to figure out how to mitigate our own upset feelings when we're in a position of power and we want our kids to learn how to navigate the world in healthy, effective, and balanced ways. You shared the dad's openness and concern and also modeled how adults can learn from our kids, if we only take the time to listen to them. Great!

Stuart: Thanks. One of the most difficult things about writing that song was getting to the ending so it felt natural and yet surprising. Lots of work in that. And I know you've written a bunch of Ah-ha! songs yourself. Let's show them one of yours.

Peter: Okay. Let's look at "Uh-Oh!" It's the title cut from an album I did for preschoolers, with Bill Harley and Mar Harman, but as you'll see, I want to include parents and grandparents too. Here it is:

Uh-Oh!
words and music by Peter Alsop
©2002 Moose School Music (BMI)

Chorus:
Uh-Oh! I made a mess. Uh-Oh! It's true
Uh-Oh! I made a mess, but that's what people do!

Verse:
Uh-Oh! I spilled my juice, dropped it on the floor!
Uh-Oh! My Grandma says, "That's what floors are for!"

Uh-Oh! I made a mess. Uh-Oh! It's true
Uh-Oh! I made a mess, but that's what people do!

Uh-Oh! I tripped and fell, got an "owie" on my knee
Uh-Oh! I think there's blood! Hey look! You wanna see?

Uh-Oh! My leg's a mess. Uh-Oh! It's true
Uh-Oh! My leg's a mess, but that's what people do

(garbage can clatter)

Uh-Oh! Wow! What was that? Did you hear that crash?
Uh-Oh! It was Daddy's car. He ran into our trash!

Uh-Oh! He made a mess. Uh-Oh! It's true
Uh-Oh! He made a mess, but that's what people do

Uh-Oh! I lost my shoe. It's in this pile somewhere
Uh-Oh! Under my shirts and socks and underwear!

Uh-Oh! My room's a mess. Uh-Oh! It's true
Uh-Oh! My room's a mess, but that's what people do

Uh-Oh! It's the TV news, my Dad looks sad tonight
Uh-Oh! Mom gets upset, when she sees grownups fight!

Uh-Oh! The world's a mess. Uh-Oh! It's true
Uh-Oh! The world's a mess, but that's what people do

Mom says "Let's clean it up!" M'Dad says "Tears will dry"
I say "If there's a mess, we can fix it if we try!"

Uh-Oh! I made a mess. Uh-Oh! It's true,
Uh-Oh! I made a mess, 'cause I'm human just like you!

Uh-Oh! I made a mess, 'cause that's what people do!
Uh-Oh! We made a mess, so let's see what we can do!

Listen to "Uh-Oh!"[4] on YouTube.

Stuart: One thing I know about performing these kinds of songs is that they require a certain focus from the audience. In many noisy energetic family concerts, there isn't enough attention to follow the thread of a story and recognize the payoff.

Peter: You're right about some settings being inappropriate for teaching songs, but all Ah-ha! songs are not necessarily teaching songs. Over the years, I've found that if I really want to play a particular song for a particular audience, I might first try to play some up-tempo songs that are more engaging and conceptually available for the kids—faster, louder, sillier—but then I can let them know I'd like to do a quiet one, and get some buy-in from

them for a song that I think might really help the adults in the room cope with something going on in the community.

Stuart: That skill set is in the performing realm, and would require another column to just scratch the surface of the many techniques that we kid performers have in our toolboxes to keep children's attention.

Peter: The only other thing I'd like to bring up about Ah-ha! songs is my concern about "what are we leaving our children?" I don't mean just our physical things, but what stories do our songs offer them? Have we modeled skill sets that will help them deal with the future quality of our food, air, and water? The best way to help them navigate our changing climate and our cultures of racism, violence, unkindness, war, and fear would be to pass on stories that will help guide them and their parents. And sometimes we aren't even aware of the powerful stories that we pass on inadvertently—stories that we've inherited unconsciously from our own cultures and families of origin.

Stuart: So our work is to be vigilant and aware of the stories we hold inside ourselves, and to carefully check them out to see if we want to pass them on to the next generation.

Peter: That's where a lot of my Ah-ha! songs come from—that Ah-ha! moment when we bust ourselves because we just recognized something we did that needs to change.

Stuart: Great. So we can address the performance techniques maybe—

Stuart and Peter: Next time!

Got other thoughts for Stuart and Peter to chew? Contact them at stuart@stotts.com[5] and peter@peteralsop.com[6].

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1. https://childrensmusic.org/pass-it-on/authors/stuart-stotts.aspx
2. https://childrensmusic.org/pass-it-on/authors/peter-alsop.aspx
3. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=smkMvEvQaPI
4. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wBOVCMphL8s
5. mailto:stuart@stotts.com
6. mailto:peter@peteralsop.com

Presidents' Message

Val Smalkin, Tim Seston

by Tim Seston and Val Smalkin
CMN Co-Presidents

Dear CMN Family,

When we look at the happy faces in the picture below, taken at the Mid-Atlantic Benefit Concert and Song Swap in Washington, DC, we smile from ear to ear. Why? Because the Children's Music Network brought people in the Mid-Atlantic Region together with people in Uganda, and they all recognize the positive power of music in children's lives.

Here's how it worked: One of our members, Stephen Wandu Bimo, lives in Uganda and works with unaccompanied child refugees in Camp Bidibidi, the world's second largest refugee camp. (Read more about his CMN collaborations in this issue's feature, "Planting Seeds of Love in South Sudan[1]".) His work inspired the Mid-Atlantic Region to hold a benefit concert along with a song swap. Ben Gundersheimer, a Grammy-award winning artist and CMN member, donated a show for the benefit of those children. It was an inspiring evening, and the Mid-Atlantic Region is committed to combining fundraising for charities in our backyard with song swaps and concerts. Do you think your region might be inspired as well? If so, just connect with your local CMN members[2] and start creating!

Members of the Mid-Atlantic Region at the 2019 Benefit Concert and Song Swap

Meanwhile, on the national level, we are happy to report that the Children's Music Network is growing and thriving through the dedicated work of many volunteers. Rather than list them all here, we invite you to peruse our list of ongoing projects and volunteers[3], and perhaps even join in the satisfying work!

Our Board's most exciting goal for this year is to act on the insights we gained through the Diversity Training Session at our 2018 Annual Conference. Building on that experience, we hope to make our community more welcoming to diverse cultures. For example, the Board has selected the National Convention Center in Washington, DC, for the CMN 2020 Annual International Conference, precisely because it is in a densely populated area accessible to various demographics, and especially because there are several Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) nearby with superb music programs. These connections will be of great benefit to us as we seek to grow. We have much to learn from our neighbors, so we are starting now to build bridges—or perhaps we should

say, open the freeway—between CMN and diverse communities so we can learn, share, and grow. We believe these changes will take time to cultivate and bring to fruition, but with attention and intention, the future looks beautifully diverse.

Your Board of Directors[4] has found working for you to be enlivening, inspiring, and even fun. We hope you will be moved to join in and make light work with many hands.

Yours in song,

Val Smalkin, val@sillygooseandval.com[5]
Tim Seston, tim@pagetoplay.com[6]

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1. https://childrensmusic.org/pass-it-on/features/planting-seeds-of-love-in-south-sudan.aspx
2. https://childrensmusic.org/regional-events
3. https://childrensmusic.org/pass-it-on/images/issues/88/presidents-message/CMN 2019 Project Volunteers.pdf
4. https://childrensmusic.org/board-of-directors
5. mailto:val@sillygooseandval.com
6. mailto:tim@pagetoplay.com

One Drum Many Songs / *Un Tambor Muchas Canciones*

The CMN 2019 Annual International Conference

by Alice Burba and Katherine Dines

As co-chairs of the upcoming 2019 conference, the two of us made a number of changes. Before anyone gets too carried away, please remember: **any and all changes are FOR THIS YEAR ONLY** (unless of course you like them enough to keep them). Thanks to the thumbs up from the CMN Board, we have felt empowered and excited to make plans that seem to work well with the venue, environment, and theme to create a unique experience for everyone. Along with all the work, we've had fun planning together and building a lasting friendship along the way.

Here are the changes we've made and some of the reasons we made them:

1. Pre-Conference Day at the Musical Instrument Museum

This museum's world-renowned collection of instruments is exceptional, and not to be missed. We knew that our members would enjoy the opportunity to explore this collection. Plus, the MIM offered us a workshop along with admission, all included in the preconference registration. This is a great opportunity to learn and grow musically outside of CMN.

2. Local Flavors

Because this is our first time in the Southwest, our opening will host three events with direct connections to the cultures of this region. First, musician Roman Orona and a few of his family members will honor and welcome the Native ancestors from these lands. Next, Ballet Folklorico will perform in celebration of the Latinx culture here. Finally, Katherine Dines will perform the song written for this year's theme—"One Drum Many Songs; *Un Tambor Muchas Canciones*"—with more of Roman Orona's magical drumming, along with the CMN Board of Directors and everyone who wants to chime in.

3. Friday Night Networking, Round Robin on Saturday Only

We realized that—on top of a day of traveling, a workshop at the MIM, and the culturally connected Opening that we felt we needed to bring us into the Conference space—adding a Friday Round-Robin to the schedule would be too much. Feedback following conferences in the past often requested more time for people to network, and we thought Friday night would be the best time for that. So we encourage you to form your own song circles, jams, conversations, etc., and hang out together! Then get ready for Liz Hannan's

brilliant and hysterical hosting at Saturday's Round-Robin. Online sign-ups were a hit last year, so watch for a link to sign up in the coming weeks. Because we will have fewer slots, consider partnering with a friend or creating a mash-up!

4. Our First *PIO!* Scholars Award

We start this new tradition as a way to engage young people who are passionate about creating music with children or working with children through music. It is an opportunity to spread the word about CMN and to bring younger members into our musical family. We will be presenting this award at the CMN Annual Meeting (scheduled after Saturday's lunch).

5. Raffle Snaffle

We decided that a new approach to our silent auction might be less complicated and more exciting. This year, we are combining smaller items and allowing people to stuff ballot boxes with as many raffle tickets as they would like for the items they hope to win. This way, more people can be involved with the chance to score a great prize for the price of a single ticket. The clever Lisa Heintz is our coordinator, and of course, she came up with the snazzy name!

6. Going Green

We are nixing as much paper as we can. We are providing refillable water bottles for all attendees. Please refill them during the day, take them home with you, and avoid any and all plastics. (And because we are in the desert, staying hydrated is really important).

7. Donations for Migrants Rather Than Glad Rags

Many of our members have asked what we can do to address the humanitarian crisis at the border so close to this year's conference. CMN member Jess Oakenstar is coordinating the collection of donations for migrants to go to a number of local charities. This donation area will replace our usual Glad Rags. A list of items will be sent through the listserv soon. Please pack a few of these extra items in your bag.

8. Snack Table Donations

Feel free to enjoy yummy treats on our snack table. We will have a donation jar set out to help defray the costs!

9. Trading Post

Regarding the Sales Table, feedback from past conferences cited no-shows at volunteer times, complaints about missing product, having to send product back if you had to leave before the sales area closed, and too much paperwork. So this year, we have a Trading Post—a place where people can go to trade, collaborate, or even sell their wares privately.

As you can tell, this conference may feel quite different. Yet we are still playing the same drum, and it will give us many songs. (We have had a *lot* of help from our wonderful network too). We hope everyone has a terrific time and that CMN's energy will echo all the way to the East Coast for next year's conference, hosted by David and Jenny Heitler-Klevans.

Welcome one and all to *Un Tambor Muchas Canciones*!

With *amor y luz* (love and light) from Alice and Katherine.

Have you registered yet? Sign up to attend the CMN 2019 Conference[1] and join us in Arizona!

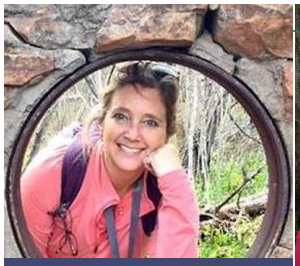
1. https://childrensmusic.org/conference

The Children's Music Network

Faces to Know

at the 2019 Conference

One Drum Many Songs / *Un Tambor Muchas Canciones* is the theme of this year's conference in Scottsdale, Arizona. As you can imagine, one conference takes many dedicated folks to organize and run. Please look for these volunteers in Scottsdale and thank them for their time, energy, and love!



Alice Burba
Conference Co-Chair, Conference Scholarship Committee, Pass It On! *Scholars Award*

Katherine Dines
Conference Co-Chair, Early Morning Exercises, Theme Song Composer

Jane Arsham
Conference Administrator, Early Morning Exercises, Conference Scholarship Committee

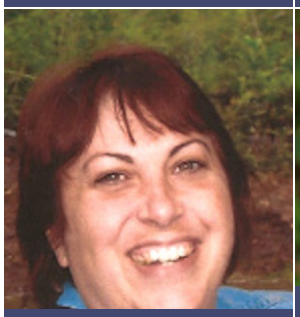
Marla Lewis
Buddy Coordinator

Alina Celeste
Workshop & Songswap Coordinator

Margaret Hooton
Workshop & Songswap Coordinator

Jay Sand
Workshop & Songswap Coordinator

Susan Salidor
Workshop & Songswap Coordinator



Lisa Heintz
Raffle Snaffle, Keynote Committee (co-chair)

Joanie Calem
Magic Penny Committee, Newcomers Welcome Circle

Kathy Reid-Naiman
Magic Penny Committee & Ceremony

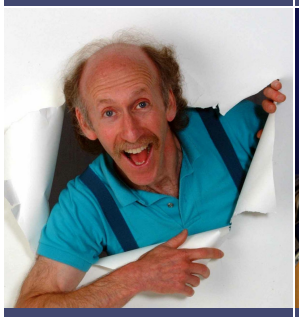
David Heitler-Klevans
Magic Penny Committee, Sound

Liz Hannan
Round-Robin Coordinator

Dave Kinnoin
Sound

Mara Sapon-Shevin
Early Morning Exercises

Susan Picking
Keynote Committee (co-chair)



Jackson Gilman
Keynote Committee

Patricia Shih
Keynote Committee

Carole Stephens
Keynote Committee

Ted Warmbrand
Keynote Committee

Val Smalkin
Conference Scholarship Committee

David Burba
Photography

Cynthia Dougherty
Newcomers Welcome Circle

Kim Wallach
Support Go-To (Ear and Hug Person)

Roman Orona
Theme Song Composer

James Coffey
Theme Song Composer

Matt Fernald
Tech Guru

2018–2019 CMN Board of Directors

Alice Burba[1]
Chandler, AZ

Amy Conley[2]
Milford, NH

Matt Fernald[3]
Stanford, CA

Alina Celeste Hevia[4]
Coral Gables, FL

Bruce O'Brien[5]
Altoona, WI

Susan Picking[6]
Beloit, WI

Dennis Ronberg[7]
Menlo Park, CA

Linda Ronberg[8]
Menlo Park, CA

Tim Seston[9]*
Concord, MA

Val Smalkin[10]*
Cockeysville, MD

* Co-President

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2. mailto:amy@amyconley.com
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5. mailto:OBrienb612@gmail.com
6. mailto:susanpicking@gmail.com
7. mailto:dronberg@me.com
8. mailto:dronberg@me.com
9. mailto:tim@pagetoplay.com
10. mailto:val@sillygooseandval.com

New Sounds

compiled by Barbara Rice

Note: These descriptions of new releases are sent in by the CMN members mentioned, but they may have been edited by Pass It On! *staff for style, consistency, or length. The materials have not been reviewed. In addition to the sources listed, many recordings are available at local independent children's book and record stores.*

KARE STRONG
BENEATH THE CHERRY TREE
Kare Strong and Josh Goforth

Exquisitely tender and imaginative stories woven from the innocence of children, the generosity of animals, and the goodness of our natural world. Here are fourteen original songs in the folk tradition that are both poetic and lyrical with an Irish-Appalachian flavor. Each is dressed up in beautiful and playful instrumental arrangements: fiddle, banjo, mandolin, guitar, piano, mountain dulcimer, and more instruments join in the fun. A mother tree tells her uncertain sapling that she is beautiful in every season just the way she is. A spellbound boy hears a bluebell flower praise the morning. A resourceful child with a dear heart protects a groundhog, and a friendship flourishes. Mole and two wrens hatch a plan to welcome Pig, who is new to the neighborhood. And on it goes, with faeries and grandparents and Wind and more characters who come to life.

Grammy-nominated multi-instrumentalist Josh Goforth and award-winning singer-songwriter Kare Strong joined forces and made *Beneath the Cherry Tree* together. Their first album, *Rivers of Love*, released in 2017, garnered six awards.

"These songs for the entire family arise from my love of children, animals, nature, poetic language, goodness, innocence, beauty, generosity, sweetness, and above all else, love itself. They are, to me, stories about what are the most real things of all. They are the way given to me to express my joy at being alive, and my wish to help our world. May these songs bring nourishment, nurture, beauty, and smiles to listeners of all ages!"

Available as CD or downloaded at CD Baby[1] or at Amazon and Bandcamp for download only.

JEAN MILMAN
SUNFLOWER

Jean's first CD, *Sunflower*, is a collection of songs Jean wrote mostly about her experiences in nature.

Five of the songs all had their start on or near the towpath—a walking path along the canal that runs parallel to the Delaware River and is about fifty steps from her kitchen door. "Fishing," written from a young child's perspective, was inspired by sitting with her son, Matthew, when he was fishing on the canal at age five or six. "Honey Bee," with a very singable refrain, is kind of a love song to the honeybee. "Sunflower" was written with citizen scientists in mind. "All Kinds of Animals" was originally conceived as a movement song; it is a true song that describes the movements of the animals Jean sees as she walks along the towpath with her dog.

Jean was able to share some of these songs last year with members of the CMN community at a regional song swap, the annual meeting, and Kindiecom. "It has been such a joy to connect with this fabulous, supportive group of professional children's musicians. I hope you enjoy *Sunflower*!"

Available as CD through CD Baby as well as a variety of download and streaming services.

KIM WALLACH
CHATTER OF THE FINCHES

Kim is pleased to announce the recent arrival of her new CD of original songs, *Chatter of the Finches*. Ken Whitely produced, advised, arranged, and organized all the musicians, and they recorded in his studio in Toronto. While this is intended for adults, there are some songs that may work for everyone, like "Pet Your Dog."

Kim says, "I write songs to understand what is going on, either personally or in the world, and to manage my emotional response. Sometimes I write because an image or an idea grabs me and won't let go." Some of the songs have incubated for decades, such as "Dark and Rainy Night" and "Cowboy and the Umbrella." Others slipped out quickly, like "Settle In" and "Comfort on Their Wings." There are songs about friendship, being a refugee, hanging spoons from your face, decision making, dancing, and wondering.

Each song is fully realized—they have become more than what Kim imagined they could be.

Available directly from Kim at kim.wallach3@gmail.com[2].

JOHN KEENAN and JO-ANNE WILSON-KEENAN
CHILDREN ON PARADE
Bay Song

These twelve fun songs celebrate the joy that music brings to children's lives. Children are invited to join a parade and find their own way to participate in music and in life. They will delight in songs such as "Einstein Squirrel," "Mac 'n' Cheese Overture," and "Blueberry Blues."

The album will appeal to children in preschool and elementary school. The songs may be shared with parents, librarians, teachers, caregivers, and community program staff. These interactive songs encourage listeners to move and sing along.

The songs immerse children in a variety of musical styles, including folk, R&B, rock, reggae, country, and blues. In "My Air Guitar," children hear rock, country, and blues all in one song.

Bay Song is a singing duo consisting of John Keenan and Jo-Anne Wilson-Keenan, who live near Cape Cod Bay in Massachusetts, U.S.A.

Available through major distributors, including CD Baby, iTunes, and Amazon Music. Shelf-ready library packaging and processing is available from Midwest Tapes.

TRACY NEWMAN
SING WITH ME

If you want to have a rousing good time with your kids, Tracy Newman's third album, *Sing With Me*, is a bull's-eye, with fifteen artfully crafted songs that are teeming with joy, gushing with fun, and propelled by Tracy's clear, friendly voice that hits the sweet spot between mom and playmate. Love and wonderment abound in this freewheeling, jingle-jangle celebration of the magic of childhood.

The eco-friendly packaging includes all the lyrics, which helps facilitate sing-alongs. Tracy says "I was writing songs for kids when I was in my twenties (but didn't record), then I took a long, long break to write for TV and actually make a living. Now I'm back to doing what I love most: writing songs for little kids. And now I have a grandson, so that in itself is my greatest inspiration."

Children ages newborn to six, and anyone who is around kids, will enjoy this CD. Among the special songs, "Walking Bear" was written for Tracy's grandson, Logan, when he took his first steps. The chorus starts with "One step, two steps, three steps, four, Logan is a-walking 'cross the kitchen floor." Feel free to use the song with your own special child's name in it!

"Birdie Fly Down, Down" was written many years ago, by Patty Zeitlin, one of the founding members of CMN. The pre-K kids Tracy sings to request it the instant she sets foot into their classroom, and when they sing it, they stand up, flap their arms like birds, move up and down, and articulate every word, good and loud. It's a wonderful warm-up, with a great melody. *Warning: It's a serious ear worm!*

Available at Amazon, iTunes, and runalonghome.com[3].

DAVE KINNOIN
ALL I DO IS HOP
Grin Brigade

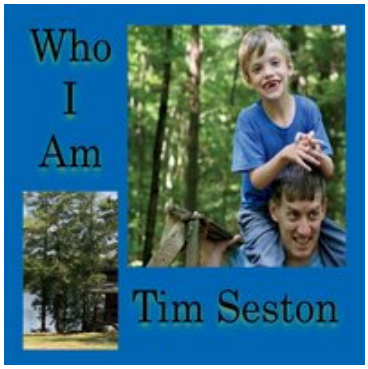
Grin Brigade is back with *All I Do Is Hop*, their second eclectic and unpredictable mix of twenty-nine (not a typo!) songs that keep you guessing what musical treat will pop up next. A blend of kid funk, blues, pop, rock, country, anthem, and ballad, this wild jumble of tunes about a whole mess of things will make you happy, make you think, make you feel, and make you laugh.

Helmed by Dave Kinnoin (of Randy & Dave), Grin Brigade is a revolving group of top-flight singers, musicians, and songwriters, which this time includes Randy & Dave; partner, hit country songwriter, and Grammy Award-winner Randy Sharp; and Grammy nominee and children's music icon Red Grammer.

All I Do Is Hop covers a delightfully dizzying number of topics as the production effortlessly moves from genre to genre with vocalists beautifully matched to their material. The follow-up to the multi-award-winning *Crazy with Happiness*, Grin Brigade once again provides something for every listener.

So hop to it, have fun, and discover your favorites!

Available at CD Baby, Amazon, and iTunes.



TIM SESTON
WHO I AM

Who I Am is a collection of songs written by Tim Seston over the course of two years for two different musical theater productions. The two shows were performed by campers ages eight to sixteen at Camp Pok-O-MacCready[4] in Willsboro, New York, under the direction of Tim Seston. On July 22, 2017, *Once in a Lifetime* made its debut on the camp stage and included the first seven songs of this album. On July 28, 2018, *The Rock* made its debut on the camp stage and included the final seven songs of this album.

Of special interest, the third track on the album, "Scissors and a Crayon," was inspired by a CMN workshop on creating group songs with multiple voices. Tim has made Doodly videos for four of the tracks. See them here on Tim's YouTube channel[5].

Once in a Lifetime:

Act 1: Campers have been coming to Poko for as long as they can remember. It looks and feels the same as always but there is something strange about camp this season.

Act 2: What is Teddy talking about? It is not the twenty-first century. Turns out the campers have all been born in different years and yet they are all in this moment at the same time.

The Rock:

Year after year, people return to The Rock for a variety of reasons. Some are intrigued by the stories, some feel empowered by the gathering, some believe The Rock has mystical powers that influence each individual at the very core.

Full synopses and director's notes[6] for these productions can be found on Tim's website.

CDs—both physical (limited copies) and digital—available at CD Baby.

JOYCE ROUSE
HERSTORY
Earth Mama

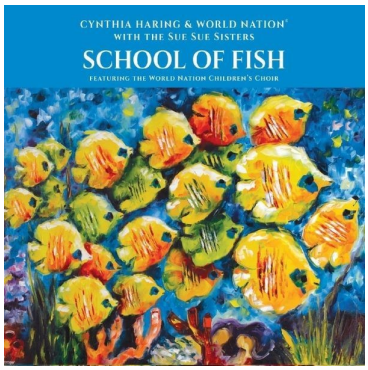
This CD is the perfect Women's Suffrage collectable gift. *HerStory* is a lyrical collection of original songs honoring the lives, loves, and work of women in celebration of upcoming Women's Suffrage Centennial. Included are a new twenty-fifth anniversary recording of "Standing on the Shoulders" anthem and a new song for Mother's Day.

The first single, "Women Rock the World" is an up-tempo pop/rock anthem celebrating the incredible power of women and the ways all women "rock the world," from cradling babies to riding a rocket in space! Features a strong singalong chorus to a dance groove.

These empowering songs are great for nurturing strong girls to become Awesome Women!

Available at EarthMama.hearnow.com[7], SongsforTeaching.com[8], CD Baby, iTunes, Amazon, Spotify, Pandora, and Apple Music.

CYNTHIA HARING
SCHOOL OF FISH



School of Fish is a collection of ten energetic, fun, playful songs in the pop vocal, Americana music style for kids of all ages. During the first two weeks the album was released, it raised $2,500 for charity. 100 percent of all CD sales was given to these charities: Beat Nb! (neuroblastoma) cancer in children, educational scholarships for future teachers, and support for a local wildlife rehab and rescue group—all volunteer, operating on a shoestring. Artists performed shows within a three-week span to raise the money, which helped get them on Billboard Heatseeker charts for two weeks.

Cynthia composed "Song for Ezra," in memory of a little boy who passed away from a terrible childhood cancer, neuroblastoma, at age two and a half. "It broke my heart when I knew about Ezra some years back, so I made sure his song got on *School of Fish*." Ezra is the reason Cynthia chose to donate proceeds to Beat Nb!

"Cockadoodle Doo Doo" is a fun protest song about doing the right thing and cleaning up dog doo. The chorus: *"Just bring a little bag and a scooper too, will just take a minute it's the least you can do, pick up that treasure your little dog left, would really appreciate it, you bet!"*

Available at worldnationgroup.com[9], CD Baby, iTunes, and Amazon.

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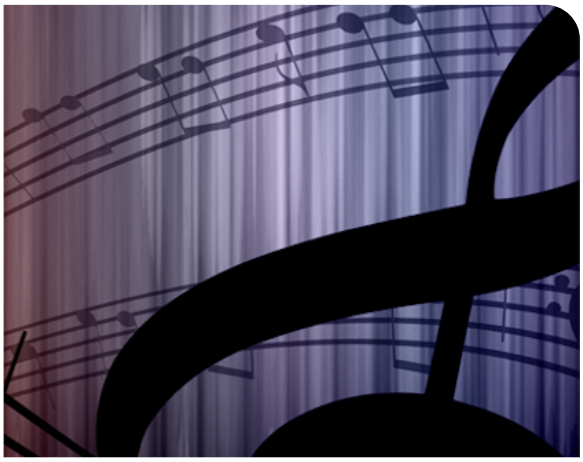
1. https://store.cdbaby.com/cd/karestrongjoshgoforth
2. mailto:kim.wallach3@gmail.com
3. http://runalonghome.com
4. https://www.pokomac.com
5. https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCzgS1gjSKpQ3QkuGiV80jxw?view_as=subscriber
6. http://www.frompagetoplay.com/cdlibrary/wia.html
7. https://earthmama.hearnow.com/herstory
8. http://songsforteaching.com
9. http://worldnationgroup.com

About *Pass It On!*



Pass It On! has scores of songs to sing: all are for children, some are by children; some are serious, others lighthearted. It offers in-depth interviews with performers, teachers, musicians, and storytellers—who have included children's music legends such as Ella Jenkins, Jean Ritchie, Pete Seeger, and Raffi—and columns, news, and information about using music in the classroom, the roots, history, and growth of children's music, and much more.

CMN members receive access to all issues of *Pass It On!* Join Now

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How to Submit Something to *Pass It On!*

Articles
Pass It On! always needs stories from members about what they're doing and how they're doing it. If you are a CMN member, you are invited to share your story. After all, that's the whole point of CMN.

Songs
Most of the songs published in *Pass It On!* are contributed by CMN members, and we welcome songs written by people from various parts of the continent or the world. Please share your works with us.

New Sounds
Children's Music Network members, please send a description of your new releases within the last year to be included on the New Sounds page.

Interested? Read our guidelines for submission to *Pass It On!*

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Guidelines for Submission

Articles in this journal do not necessarily represent the views of the Children's Music Network, nor do the advertisements imply endorsement. Members are invited to send songs and articles for publication directly to the appropriate editors, but we cannot guarantee publication. It is helpful if you let an editor know in advance that you plan to submit an article.

Copyright ownership remains with the author, photographer, or other producer. Upon acceptance, you will be asked to sign a permission to publish form.

Articles

Pass It On! always needs stories from members about what they're doing and how they're doing it. If you are a CMN member, you are invited to share your story. After all, that's the whole point of CMN. We ask that all articles:

- address topics of interest to CMN members
- in some way relate to CMN's mission
- be clear, concise, and reasonably well written

Articles should not promote a particular person, performing group, or product. Please tell us if your article has been submitted for publication elsewhere, or if it is a reprint. We welcome photos, which will be published as space permits.

Send articles, lesson plans, photographs and their captions, to the *PIO!* Editor. Submission via email is preferred.

Songs

Most of the songs published in *Pass It On!* are contributed by CMN members, and we welcome songs written by people from various parts of the continent or the world. Please share your works with us. In every issue we try to include:

- a seasonal song
- a song representative of cultural diversity
- a song on a topic that is in some way representative of CMN's mission

Songs should be submitted using Finale or in a lead sheet format. It is the responsibility of the submitter to provide a notated song. Also, please send an MP3 file or a recording: an audio link is provided to each song. Each submission should include the title of the song, all authors of words/music, and copyright date and name(s) of copyright owner(s).

Send songs to the Songs Editor.

New Sounds

Children's Music Network members, please send a description of your new releases within the last year to be included on the New Sounds page. The description is intended to give readers an idea of the content and style of your recording or book. Please do not send just a promotional sheet. Feel free to send a graphic of your album cover, too. Send descriptions of new releases to the New Sounds Editor.

Letters to the Editor

Letters to the editor may be sent to the *PIO!* Editor. Submission via email is preferred.

Deadlines
For the Spring 2020 issue: January 1, 2020
For the Fall 2020 issue: June 1, 2020

The Children's Music Network